EAST BAY EXPRESS

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MUSIC 37

Prisoners of the Cosco Busan

As a judge prepares to sentence the chief culprit in the 2007 oil spill, his detention will still be briefer than that of the innocent witnesses who helped prevent a much greater catastrophe. By John Upton

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SAVING SUNOL AND OHLONE

A new settlement will delay the opening of a huge new East Bay quarry and help protect elk, eagles, and two area parks.

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A TASTE OF SPAIN IN TEMESCAL

Daniel Olivella keeps things traditional and casual at Barlata

thew Stafford

Barlata looks and feels like a cool Barcelona hangout, where students with knapsacks and old men in berets drop by for a glass of wine or a saucer of almonds and pass the evening with good talk and *crema catalana*. Big windows let in plenty of sunshine. Mod light fixtures, blood-red walls, a planked ceiling, and artwork of Iberian sardine cans summon the spirit of Gaudí. There's a long twenty-seat table down the middle of the room where friends and strangers can get to know one another better over platters of *pulpo* and paella, and the seven-seat marble-topped wine bar is a fine place to sample the fermented grape juice of Galicia, Navarra, and Castilla. *Story inside*

BODY & SOUL 24

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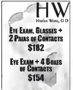

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On the Cover *Cosco Busan. Photo courtesy of US Coast Guard.*

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Staff Writer Robert Gammon
Staff Writer/Calendar Editor Rachel Swan
Clubs Editor/Editorial Coordinator Nate Seltenrich
Editorial Interns Cassie Harwood, Jonathan Mann, Benjamin Taylor, A. Iltanowdo
Proofreader Claudia Bauer
Contributors John Birdsall, Stan Campbell, DeWitt Cheng, Chris Duffey, Ralph Ellis, Dave Gil de Rubio, Matthew Green, Jessica Grewell, Cole Haddon, J.R. Jones, Kathy Kleiman, Eric Kain, J. port, Anneli Rufus, Jason Victor Serinus, Matthew Stafford, Kelly Vance

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Graphic Designers Brian Kelly, Nicholas Wong

Business
Publisher Judy Colley
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NEWS & OPINION

EAST BAY EXPRESS
HOME BUT NOT ALONE

LETTERS

[illegible]

Don't Blame the Workers

It was disappointing to see the *Express* and some politicians resorting to corporate-style "blame the workers" rhetoric.

Oakland's budget crisis is no mystery. Like every major city, revenues have plummeted due to the collapse of the housing market and the recession. Police, fire, and legal mandates account for all but $70 million of the general fund. Even if every civilian employee worked for free, it still wouldn't solve the problem.

Civilian employees have not had raises since 2007 and are not asking for raises in our current contract talks. We suffered layoffs last October and since January we've taken 10 percent pay cuts. We have offered more economic concessions and proposed a retirement incentive program to shrink the workforce by attrition instead of forced layoffs, but the city still demands more cuts.

Oakland's police received a 4 percent pay increase in 2008 and will get another 4 percent raise in July. The city spends more per officer on overtime than any other city in the country — as much as $35,000 each. In San Francisco, the police agreed to defer $14 million in raises to help close their deficit.

Our members are ready to do their part, but this crisis requires that everyone share the burden. Our alternative budget to fix Oakland's crisis will be released soon. We hope residents and our political leaders will support reasonable budget solutions that reflect Oakland's values and protect services, jobs, and quality of life.

Jeffrey Levin, vice-president for Oakland, and Bob Muscat, executive director, IFPTE Local 21

[illegible]

There Will Be Spoilers

I enjoyed Rachel Swan's enthusiasm and style in the recent review of Berkeley Repertory Theatre's *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*. That said, I was extremely disappointed by how much of the plot and the surprises of the play are given away in it! Ms. Swan herself says in this article of McDonagh's playwrighting: "He has a wonderful way of withholding details ... saving the 'aha' moment for the very end." In reading this review, I only wished Ms. Swan could have taken inspiration from McDonagh and thought twice before revealing so much of what happens, as much of this play's (and most plays'!) strength is in surprising its audience.

Michael Austin, San Francisco

[illegible]

Consider the Sierras

East Bay residents, I urge you to think about your impact — this time in the sierras. I own a house in Amador County and clearly see the degradation of land and river to get EBMUD water to the Bay Area. Let's choose conservation and water recycling rather than ruining our *sierras*. Please support the Foothill Conservancy that works to protect the *sierras* for future generations: FoothillConservancy.org.

Catherine Squire, Richmond

[illegible]

Rush Isn't a Blowhard

Robert Gammon is lying when he writes that Rush Limbaugh is "an idiot blowhard who wants ... Obama and ... the country to fail." What Limbaugh said was Obama wants to nationalize banking, healthcare, and the auto industry. I hope he fails.

Let's review: 1) Banking: The top honchos in the Obama administration are the same people who gave us Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae, and years of unregulated credit bubbles. 2) Healthcare: Do we really want to be like Canada and have seventeen-week waits to see a doctor? 3) Detroit: Our auto industry is dying because people can buy cars they like better, for less money, from other makers. Obama is doing nothing to address the $7 billion GM coughed up for pensions and retiree health benefits. Restricting executive pay is less than a finger in the dike, while unionized greed is unchecked; enacting laws that require us to buy another "green" vehicles won't stop the carnage.

Gammon usually has been reliable and accurate. This was a disappointment.

David Alsadai, J.D., Berkeley

Letters Policy

Please provide your full name, address, and daytime phone number, although we will only print your name, city, and affiliation. Send submissions to Letters@EastBayExpress.com or Letters, *East Bay Express*, 1335 Stanford Ave., Suite 100, Emeryville, CA 94608. Letters are edited for length and clarity.

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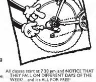

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SUMMER 2009

CALIFORNIANS WANT FEWER PUBLIC SERVICES

At least that's how Schwarzenegger and Republicans interpret the overwhelming defeat of the statewide ballot measures.

By Robert Gammon

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger plans across-the-board cuts to state services to balance California's $21 billion deficit after voters soundly rejected five budget compromise measures last week. Schwarzenegger is interpreting the voters' decision as a mandate to not raise taxes. "I think that the message was clear from the people," he said, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "Go all out and make those cuts and live within your means." Schwarzenegger is likely to propose cuts to education, healthcare for the poor, and law enforcement, according to the *San Jose Mercury News*. For Alameda County, the defeat of the ballot measures will mean an additional $70 million shortfall on top of the $178 million budget hole the county already has. The *Oakland Tribune* also reported that the state's budget mess likely would severely impact the City of Oakland and its public schools, along with other local school districts.

State voters knew the cuts were coming if they turned down the measures, but didn't seem to care. In fact, the election featured a strange alliance between anti-tax conservatives and left-wingers who appeared to welcome another budget crisis in apparent hope that it would lead to meaningful government reforms. But for now, the anti-tax side appears to have won the day, because it's highly doubtful that California Republicans are going to roll over and agree to overhaul state government. As for the call by liberals and progressives for a statewide Constitutional convention to change how Sacramento does business: don't hold your breath.

Indeed, Schwarzenegger's belief that the election results mean voters prefer service cuts to higher taxes or a radical change in how budgets are passed is likely to be pervasive in Sacramento — especially among conservatives who view the defeat of the measures as a victory for their side. The propositions, after all, were most unpopular in right wing strongholds. In conservative San Bernardino County, for example, most of the measures lost by more than 40 percentage points. Statewide, Propositions 1A through 1E lost by about 25 percentage points. In the liberal East Bay, by contrast, the vote was much closer. Alameda County voters, for instance, nearly approved 1B (50.5 percent to 49.5 percent) and 1A wasn't that far behind (56-44).

Oakland Gets New Supe

The Oakland school board selected Tony Smith, a top administrator in San Francisco public schools and a supporter of small schools and charter schools, to be the district's new permanent superintendent. The board's vote was unanimous. Smith, an Oakland resident whose child will attend Crocker Highlands Elementary, a public school, beat out two other finalists. He also is a former superintendent of the tiny Emeryville school district and once worked for the Bay Area Coalition of Equitable Schools, a primary backer of the small schools movement. According to the *Trib*, Smith said at a town hall meeting last week that he also was "a pretty big backer of the charter movement."

Smith is Oakland's first permanent superintendent since Dennis Chaconas in 2003, and he will replace interim Superintendent Roberta Mayor on July 1. But the question now is whether state schools Chief Jack O'Connell will finally relinquish his power over the district's finances, and let Smith and the school board actually run the city's school system.

CHP Nabs Two East Bay Snipers

The California Highway Patrol arrested two 21-year-olds for a series of shootings along Interstate 680 in Fremont. The CHP says the young men, Shawn Philip Wagner of Mariposa and Rojelio Samuel Gomez of Fremont, shot at more than forty cars with a BB gun and a pellet gun. The cops booked both men on 42 counts of felony assault with a deadly weapon and 43 counts of felony vandalism. No one was injured in the shootings. Let's hope the CHP got this right, because the last time the East Bay was terrorized by a sniper or snipers in 2004, the CHP arrested the wrong guy and no charges were ever filed.

Good-Bye Speakeasy

The El Cerrito Speakeasy Theater shuttered its doors last week, following the closure of Oakland's Parkway Theater earlier this year. Kyle and Catherine Fischer, who owned both movie houses and who hadn't paid rent in months, had asked the El Cerrito City Council for additional financial aid and had offered to help in a search for new owners of the El Cerrito Theater, but then apparently gave up.

Three-Dot Roundup

The state's budget problems also will affect state legislators. A state commission voted to slash the legislators' pay by 18 percent, which means lawmakers' salaries will drop to just over $95,200. ... A brazen West Berkeley murder followed by a high-speed police chase into North Oakland resulted in the deaths of two innocent bystanders. ... Oakland police demoted Deputy Chief Jeffrey Loman two ranks to lieutenant in the wake of a sex harassment investigation. But then Oakland brass made an odd move and reassigned Loman to the investigative team, even though he came under criticism for his handling of the Chauncey Bailey murder case. ... President Barack Obama nominated former top Oakland city official Rosie Rios to be the next United States treasurer. Rios had been fired by then Mayor Jerry Brown in 2003 for her work in trying to build a downtown stadium for the Oakland A's. ... And finally, Obama decided to copy California's anti-global warming efforts, by announcing new fuel efficiency mandates for cars, SUVs, and light trucks. ●

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ECO WATCH

A DEAL TO SAVE SUNOL AND OHLONE

A new settlement will delay the opening of a huge new East Bay quarry and help protect elks, eagles, and two parks.

Robert Gammon

For years, environmentalists have steeled themselves for a fight with the East Bay's top road builder and quarry operator. Ed DeSilva appeared to be on the brink of opening a massive quarry right next to two breathtaking regional wildernesses — Sunol and Ohlone — in southeastern Alameda County. The giant quarry also threatened to devastate the East Bay's only tule elk herd habitat, disrupt one of the world's best golden eagle nesting grounds, and disturb the tranquility of more than 50,000 park visitors a year. But then last week, the two environmental groups that had vowed to fight the quarry announced a sweeping settlement agreement with DeSilva.

The deal between DeSilva and the Alameda Creek Alliance and the Center for Biological Diversity promises to delay the mine opening for decades while significantly lessening its ultimate impact on the elk, eagles, and parks. In addition, DeSilva has promised to pay up to $3 million to help restore the decimated steelhead and Chinook salmon runs in nearby Alameda Creek, from the San Francisco Bay through Niles Canyon to the eastern end of the Sunol Valley. "This is huge," said Jeff Miller, director of the Alameda Creek Alliance and conservation advocate for the Center for Biological Diversity. "It's going to make the resurgence of steelhead and Chinook salmon much more possible."

Jim Summers, president of the DeSilva Group, said last week that he and his colleagues decided it made more sense to negotiate an agreement with environmentalists than wage an extended and expensive court fight. "Rather than going through all the legal battles, we decided to take that money and put it into conservation measures," he said. "And we get the ability to say that we're operating a quarry that is in concert with the environment."

The environmental groups' staunch opposition to the quarry made the odds of reaching any deal low. In fact, the settlement took nearly two years to negotiate. But in retrospect, it should have come as no surprise, considering DeSilva's track record for deal making. Back in 1984, he originally obtained a county permit for the quarry after reaching agreements with both the East Bay Regional Park District and the Sierra Club. As part of those deals, DeSilva promised to share proceeds of his quarry operation with the district and buy 300 acres of land and give it to the park system. In addition, he financed an extensive study of large birds in the area, including the golden eagles, while promising to relocate the elk herd to another habitat.

DeSilva put off opening the quarry because of steep start-up costs. The planned quarry is in a remote location, on top of a privately owned 2,200-foot-tall mountain known as Apperson Ridge. However, a few years ago, DeSilva decided he was finally ready to open it, because his other East Bay quarries in Fremont, Hayward, and Oakland had run out of rock. And although both the park district and the Sierra Club had promised to not stand in the way of his Apperson Ridge quarry, DeSilva hadn't counted on the Alameda Creek Alliance and the Center for Biological Diversity, which has become one of the most aggressive and litigious environmental organizations in the country. (For more on the quarry, see "We're Outta Here," 4/12/06).

Nonetheless, Summers and DeSilva decided to find out whether they could strike a deal just as they had done in 1984. Summers approached Miller, who described himself as being "very skeptical." In addition, Summers tried to find a stopgap that would delay the opening of Apperson Ridge. He approached the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, a major land owner in the Sunol area and the owner of a separate rock quarry on the valley floor. DeSilva then submitted a bid to take over that quarry, which had been run by another operator, Cemex.

In 2007, as Summers was beginning negotiations with Miller, DeSilva won the right to enter into exclusive negotiations with the San Francisco PUC over the Cemex quarry, which still has another twenty to thirty years of rock left in it. DeSilva decided it would make more sense to mine that quarry for the next few decades, and then open Apperson Ridge. That way, he would have a sixty-year supply — or more — of rock needed for road building.

But the plan still threatened the eagles, elk, and parks — albeit twenty to thirty years from now. So DeSilva and Summers decided to modify it more. One of the biggest threats posed by the Apperson Ridge quarry was a five-mile-long road that would connect the mountaintop to Interstate 680. DeSilva had planned to run more than 1,100 dump trucks a day up and down that road, carrying up to 24 tons of rock each. The road bisected the elk's habitat inside San Francisco PUC property, and experts warned that the noisy trucks would disperse the herd and ultimately cause its demise. The state Fish and

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Game Department also had told DeSilva that he could not move the herd to another habitat because there were no more suitable ones in California.

The quarry itself also threatened the herd because of ear-splitting decibels from dynamiting rock, crushing it, and turning it into asphalt. All that noise also promised to disrupt the nesting habitat of golden eagles in the nearby Sunol and Ohlone Wilderness areas, and ruin the experience of park visitors. So in the recent deal, DeSilva agreed to build a giant conveyor belt from the top of Apperson Ridge down to the quarry in the valley. That way, he could eliminate the need to run dump trucks up and down the mountain. He also agreed to move almost all of the rock crushers and the asphalt plant to the valley quarry, thereby eliminating most of the noise problems. Summers also said that modern explosives have lowered the decibels associated with blasting rock out of the earth.

So will the new plan protect the elk? Miller said his groups have talked with elk experts, who say the conveyor belt will be a big improvement over the road, because the animals will be able to walk underneath it, and won't have to contend with huge dump trucks. The absence of the rock crushers and the asphalt plant also will help. But the dynamiting could produce considerable noise, even with modern technology. "The key issue is if the elk can acclimate to the noise, then they'll live with it," he said. And if they can't? DeSilva has agreed to pay $250,000 a year to help support other Northern California elk habitats.

As for the eagles, both sides hope the absence of the trucks, the rock crushers, and the asphalt plant will allow them to prosper. The settlement also requires DeSilva to cease quarrying operations when eagles are nesting nearby. DeSilva also has committed to exploring the option of closing the mine entirely during the eagles' spring nesting season — which also coincides with the elk's calving season. The question is whether the San Francisco PUC will allow him to stockpile rock in the valley quarry to get him through those months. As further mitigation, DeSilva has promised to buy at least 600 more acres of similar habitat and dedicate it as permanent open space.

However, the entire deal between DeSilva and the environmental groups depends on whether the San Francisco PUC and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors award the valley quarry to DeSilva. The commission is scheduled to take up the issue on June 9, and then forward it to the board of supes. If DeSilva gets turned down, then Summers says they'll move to open the Apperson Ridge Quarry right away. That, in turn, will force the environmental groups to sue. To avoid all that, the groups have promised to help DeSilva get the quarry permit. In fact, the groups actually reached their settlement agreement in December but didn't make it public until last week in order to give themselves time to discuss it fully with San Francisco PUC staffers. Miller sounded confident about their prospects.

As for the steelhead and the Chinook salmon, DeSilva has agreed to pay up to $4 million to help finance fish ladders over three major barriers on Alameda Creek. The ladders could end up costing $10 million or more to install, but the financial commitment by DeSilva will help other public agencies involved raise money to finance the projects, Miller said. ●

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CubeTree: A Step Forward for Office Communication

by Mielle Sullivan, Janus Networks

Inter-office communication can be complicated. There are lots of messages: messages for you, messages for your team, messages for your branch or company as a whole, interesting articles coworkers share... the list goes on. To often all of these messages can end up in a big pile in your inbox-- where they can easily be lost. A new startup, CubeTree, address some of the challenges of workplace communication through a platform inspired by social networking.

In CubeTree, employees can create a profile, send out micro-updates, "follow" other coworkers, share documents, set up wikis, and much more. One particularly useful feature is the search tool-- great for finding documents created by coworkers and filed with mysterious logic. The passive sharing of micro-updates for non essential information, like industry articles, is convenient because it helps reduce emails and therefore the chances that an important message will be buried.

Setup is quick and painless. Because CubeTree exists in the cloud, there is nothing to install. Just sign up for one of their three subscription levels and begin. Most employees will already be familiar with the social networking environment, so training is minimal. CubeTree also easily incorporates information from other commonly used office programs, such as Google Reader, Salesforce and Tripit trips.

Of course CubeTree is not the only company to take an idea that evolved in the social space and use it for the workplace. Yammer is already the standard for business micro-messaging, SocialText delivers workplace wiki solutions and LinkedIn is the site for professional profiles. But CubeTree offers it all, on one platform with superior security assurance because the founders come straight from Symantec, an IT security leader.

For all its functionality, CubeTree is not an office suite. It doesn't compete with any of the standard business software but rather stands along side it. CubeTree is a complimentary office tool to help coworkers stay more organized and in better communication, something nearly every workplace could use in today's hyper-information age.

You can contact the Author at press@janusnetworks.com

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The Cosco Busan sits at port in Oakland following its November 7, 2007 oil spill in the bay

Photo: Coast Guard courtesy US Coast Guard

PRISONERS OF THE COSCO BUSAN

As a judge prepares to sentence the chief culprit in the 2007 oil spill his detention will still be briefer than that of the innocent witnesses who helped prevent a much greater catastrophe

By John Upton

When Liang Xian Zheng took a job working as the boatswain on the *Cosco Busan*, the seasoned seaman knew the $29.50-a-day gig would send him out to sea for six to ten months. He also knew it meant undertaking a wearisome 1,000-mile journey from his home in Beijing, China to the port of Busan in South Korea, where the container ship was based. But what Zheng couldn't have known was that, two weeks after boarding the cargo ship and ably performing his duties as a lookout during a crash, he would be trapped in a foreign land on an exotic legal warrant, in misery and legal purgatory, until months after his seafaring expedition was supposed to have ended.

During the foggy morning of November 7, 2007, the *Cosco Busan*'s port side scraped for sixteen seconds against a protective fender that buffered one tower of the Bay Bridge. The fender sliced a 212-foot gash in the ship's hull, tearing open two fuel tanks and producing an environmental disaster. Most of the two tanks' 60,000 gallons of fuel, which made up a small portion of the 1 million gallons pumped into the ship's bunkers to power its journey back to South Korea, gushed into San Francisco Bay. The cheap, black bunker fuel — heavier than water and cut with diesel to make it runny enough for engines — closed beaches, halted crabbing and fishing, killed fish eggs, seals, and thousands of birds, and raised cancer-causing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons to unsafe levels in shellfish. After initially underestimating the size of the spill, the Coast Guard waited until dusk before it called in its oil-spill cleanup specialists. More than half of the spilled fuel sank, evaporated, washed out to sea, or became buried beneath shoreline sand. Cleanup efforts cost more than $70 million, and the environmental impacts are still being calculated.

The ship's operator, Fleet Management, quickly lawyered up. Today, it faces criminal charges and civil lawsuits related to allegations that its crew contributed to the crash, was inadequately trained, and doctored documents to mislead investigators. But Zheng and his fellow sailors also soon discovered that they too needed legal representation.

Fleet Management's attorneys brought three downtown San Francisco lawyers into the case to represent Zheng and five other crew members whose testimony was sought by the government. The attorneys instructed the men to not talk to the media or cooperate with preliminary investigations. They secured the men immunity from prosecution in exchange for their testimony, and struck a deal that kept the sailors out of incarceration but trapped in Northern California until long after the ship and their eighteen colleagues had left US waters.

Immunity was valuable for some of the sailors, who clearly failed to fulfill their duties. Master Mao Cai Sun meekly abdicated control of his ship to a pilot who was affected by pharmaceuticals. First Mate Kongguang Hu left his post as lookout to eat breakfast. Second Mate Shan Bao Zhao failed to plan the ship's course out of the bay and then forged his colleagues' signatures on a plan drafted after the accident. And Third Mate Hong Zhi Wang failed to monitor the ship's path using GPS.

But there was no evidence of wrongdoing by the lower-ranking Zheng, who was detained as a witness because he was serving as lookout and first spotted the bridge, or against his underling, Helmsman Zong Bin Li, who was dutifully operating the rudder under direction of the pilot on the morning of the accident.

Nonetheless, for the year that followed the crash, all six men, including the blameless Zheng and Li, were shuttled between San Francisco hotel rooms and an apartment by an employer charged with crimes for which the crew members were held as witnesses, not suspects. They were kept in Northern California on so-called material witness warrants.

Such warrants became popular several centuries ago, to secure needed evidence when prosecutions were delayed and there was no alternative to in-court testimony. In the 20th century, they became useful for obtaining the testimony of foreign citizens or people smuggled into the United States. Under President George W. Bush, use of the warrants against seafarers involved in pollution-related trials rose, according to Douglas Stevenson, the policy and advocacy director at the 175-year-old Seamen's Church Institute. "There's really not any mechanism, once a foreign citizen goes home, for being sure they'll come back when they're needed for a trial," Stevenson noted.

Attorneys for the *Cosco Busan* crew argued in court that their clients' constitutional rights were being violated. However, the Supreme Court has never ruled on the constitutionality of this obscure legal tool. "Initially, they didn't get lawyers," noted Ricardo Bascuas, a University of Miami law professor who has written on the subject and who once represented a material witness arrested after 9/11, when the Bush administration used such warrants to detain Muslims suspected of having links to radical groups and jihadists. "It was a group of people that had no incentive to complain, so there are not a lot of cases on it."

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Prisoners of the Cosco Busan

Continued from page 9

Material witness laws can turn bystanders into prisoners, And they add the prospect of in-country confinement to the other risks that must be weighed by would be whistleblowers. Four Filipino sailors aboard the *Rio Gold* cargo ship learned that lesson last May, when they were slapped with material witness warrants and held in Northern California after reporting their boss and employer for offshore oil-dumping crimes. The archaic warrants also provided rogue Bush administration officials with a legal device with which to incarcerate Muslims without proof of any wrongdoing. The sad case of Liang Xian Zheng and Zong Bin Li shows how such warrants can be abused.

A boatswain, Zheng was the *Cosco Busan's* highest-ranking unlicensed sailor. Although he lacked the English skills needed to obtain a license, he was an experienced and well trained seaman. After graduating from a Beijing high school in 1988 he spent a year at maritime academy. Among his lessons: How to serve as a lookout on a ship's bow. After graduation, Zheng secured a job as a cadet at China's COSCO Shipping Company. He had worked on nine ships when an agency recruited him for a stint aboard the *Cosco Busan*.

Unlike better-certified colleagues on that fateful assignment, Zheng didn't speak English apart from nautical words and basic commands needed for his trade. When Fleet Management contracted to operate the *Cosco Busan*, the Hong Kong-based company, which operates about 200 ships, decreed that English would be the working language for the all-Chinese crew. That effectively barred Zheng and others from reading onboard safety and operating procedures. The crew was trained in company policies aboard the ship by fly-in fly-out Fleet Management official Varminder Singh, an Indian who spoke English but not Mandarin. Master Sun translated for non English speakers during the crew's initiation, which lasted during the two-week long trip from Busan to Long Beach and then to Oakland.

At 6:15 a.m. on November 7, 2007, 45 minutes before its scheduled departure from the Oakland Port, Singhan departed the *Cosco Busan*, leaving its journey back to South Korea in the hands of Master Sun and his crew. But the crew didn't plot a course from Berth 56 out through the Golden Gate, which violated the policies in which they had just been trained. The oversight may have seemed irrelevant since an experienced local pilot would board the ship to take it out of the bay.

The 59-year-old bar pilot assigned to the *Cosco Busan*, John Cota, was a brusque, unhealthy man with a hot temper, an alcohol problem, and a history of driving under the influence. It was his seventh consecutive day on piloting duty, and he had managed just ten hours of sleep over the prior two nights. At 4 a.m. the Petaluma man's alarm clock rang out and by 6 a.m. he pulled over at the fog-draped pier in the Port of Oakland. He boarded the ship just five minutes after the instructor Singh disembarked; was greeted by the crew; commented on the fog, which reduced visibility to one-eighth to one-quarter of a mile; and turned down an offer of a coffee or a soda.

Cota radioed the Vessel Traffic Service and said he would take the ship through the Delta Echo span of the Bay Bridge, which is on the San Francisco side of Treasure Island. Two hours later, the Coast Guard-run service, which acts like a flight control tower except that it spends most of its time watching vessels and very little time controlling them, failed to warn Cota that he was sailing the container ship into a bridge tower instead of through the span.

Like other bar pilots in San Francisco Bay but unlike pilots in other harbors, Cota wasn't required to carry a laptop computer laden with navigation equipment. Instead, he relied on the *Cosco Busan's* array of onboard electronic maps and radars. But he struggled to use them. "It's not plotting, Captain," Cota told Sun after readjusting and testing the radar for forty minutes. "I've tried to plot this target five times but it never plots. It didn't plot — that's not good for fog." Eventually, he set sail. He later abandoned the radar altogether after the display appeared to him to grow distorted, and relied instead on the ship's electronic map, which marked hazards and safe passages with symbols. Investigators have concluded that the radar was working properly, and recordings show that its display did not become distorted.

In an exhaustive accident report published more than a year later, investigators for the Na-

Photo courtesy US Coast Guard

A footing of the Bay Bridge shows damage where it was struck by the vessel *Cosco Busan*

In the only known US photo of the detained Cosco Busan crew members, sailors meet with Chinese consular officials in a San Francisco hotel room Courtesy Chinanews.com

sional Transportation Safety Board concluded there was another reason for the bar pilot's difficulties. A urine sample subsequently provided by Cota, who had already been involved in thirteen shipping accidents, including one where he was counseled or blamed afterward, tested clean for cocaine, marijuana, and other illegal drugs. But it was destroyed without being tested for any of the legal pharmaceuticals that prescription records show that he had possessed, such as traces of any of the 124 hydrocodone tablets, better known as *Vicodin*, which he obtained from two pharmacists following dental surgery a month earlier. In the two months before he staggered onto the *Cosco Busan*, Cota filled prescriptions for Darvon, Valium, Imitrex, Ativan, Provigil, Zoloft, Lomotil, and Compazine, or their equivalents. Many of those drugs are addictive and at least six degrade cognitive performance.

When the ship pulled out of its dock an hour behind schedule, Zheng, the boatswain, had already spent more than four hours checking and fixing lashings that local longshoremen had sloppily strapped around the containers. He joined the Chief Mate, Kongxiang Hu, on the bow to help him serve as lookout. He soon grew alarmed by the ship's fast speed in thick fog.

In China, the *Cosco Busan* would not have sailed in such fog, Hu told Zheng in Mandarin. Yet in a failing that investigators later blamed on the Chinese crewmembers' cultural reluctance to challenge authority, none of them, including Master Sun, complained to the brash American pilot about his speed in heavy fog. Nor did they ask where he was taking their ship. At 8:13 a.m., Sun radioed Zheng and Hu to confirm that they were serving as lookouts. Seven minutes later, Hu abandoned his lookout duties and, without telling Sun, went inside to eat breakfast, leaving the lower-ranking boatswain Zheng alone as the ship's only lookout.

Zheng peered nervously into the thick fog. Inside, Cota didn't realize that he was lost. The northwest bound ship was drifting too far west across the face of the bridge as Cota tried to line it up to press through the Delta Echo span. Disregarding the radar and unable to see through the fog, the pilot relied on the ship's electronic map. He started directing the ship as it appeared on the map, toward a pair of red triangles that he thought marked the center of the 2,200-foot span between the Delta and Echo towers.

If Cota had moved the mouse cursor over one of the triangles, he would have learned its meaning.

To figure out that each of the red triangles symbolized a floating buoy rather than a bridge span, he also could have been expected to call upon his 26 years of piloting experience. Each triangle was a familiar electronic representation of the hand-drawn fin that was long ago adopted by mariners as the symbol for a conical buoy. Instead, at 8:22 a.m., Cota asked Master Sun what the triangles meant.

In accounting for Cota's perplexing action, NTSB investigators eventually concluded that "the higher-level cognitive effort and perceptual skills" needed to interpret the *Cosco Busan*'s standardized radars and maps "were precisely those capabilities that would have been degraded" by the drugs that Cota had possessed. None of Cota's difficulties using the radar or reading the map would have been expected of any pilot with sober and effective cognitive functions, the investigators concluded. In other words, they concluded, he was tripping on prescription meds.

Sun told Cota that the triangles were symbols for the bridge, which Cota took to mean the center of the bridge span. Neither of the men turned around to ask Third Mate Wang, the ship's navigational systems expert, to interpret the symbols. Wang says the pair spoke English too quickly for him to catch their conversation.

Blinded by fog and by his inability to use the ship's working radar, Cota began turning the ship in an apparent effort to navigate between the two red triangles, thinking they marked the center of the bridge span. In fact, the triangles marked buoys that were bobbing fifty feet apart on the north and south sides of the concrete Delta tower. The tower was directly between them.

At 8:27 a.m., when the ship was one-third of a mile from the bridge and moving quickly at ten knots, the four-person Vessel Traffic Service team on Yerba Buena Island noticed Cota was off course.

"Our initial thought," Watch Supervisor Mark Perez later told accident investigators, "was that he had shorted his approach or possibly he had changed to an alternate span."

Sector Controller Frank Sheppard radioed Cota. "Uh, AIS shows you on a two-three-five heading," he said. A heading refers to the direction in which a ship's bow is pointed, where north is expressed as zero degrees and south is 180. The service's automatic identification system updates the direction of a turning ship every six seconds or so. "What are your intentions?" Sheppard asked.

"Um," Cota replied. "I'm coming around and steering 280 right now."

"Roger," Sheppard replied. "Understand you still intend the Delta Echo span?"

Before replying, Cota double-checked with Sun to be sure that the pair of red triangles on the electronic map marked the center of the bridge. "Yeah, yeah," Sun replied.

Cota ordered two hard starboard turns and radioed, "Yeah, we're still Delta Echo," and kept his dangerous course.

"Uh, roger, captain," Sheppard concluded, then stared with his colleagues at monitors in horror for more than a minute as the container ship barreled toward the tower.

Zheng had been staring alone through the cold, gray mass for ten minutes, when a terrifying specter emerged. The ghostly silhouette of a gray bridge tower appeared fifty yards ahead.

"The bridge tower!" the panicked Zheng cried in Chinese.

Continued on page 12

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Prisoners of the Cosco Busan

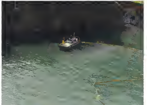
Continued from page 11

into his walkie-talkie. "The bridge tower!"

Cota and Sun looked and said they saw the tower, which was slightly on the ship's port side. Then the bar pilot's lifetime of maritime experience kicked in. He had the helmsman continue to hold the rudder at hard starboard, which wheeled the ship's bow around clockwise to the right of the Delta tower. But that swung its port side around to smash directly into it. Ten seconds later, Cota ordered the helmsman to straighten the rudder. Five seconds after that, he ordered him to turn it hard to port.

The seemingly counterintuitive port turn angled the bow back toward the tower as an eight-foot-deep gash was gouged along the ship's single-layered metal hull by the crumpling timber-and-plaster fender system. Two fuel tanks and a ballast tank ripped open as the ship ground past the fender, leading to a 53,500-gallon oil spill. But the port turn pirouetted the hulking rear of the fully-laden 901-foot ship away from the tower just in time to avoid bulldozing into it.

Zheng's watchfulness had helped prevent a catastrophic collision between the soft steel ship and the solid concrete bridge tower that could have ruptured the ship and sent hundreds of thousands of gallons of its fuel into the bay. And what was his reward? As a witness to alleged crimes, he was ordered to surrender his passport and report to a US court. If he entered another state or country, he risked becoming the unemployed target of an international arrest warrant.



Scott Epperson courtesy US Coast Guard

Workers deploy a boom in an effort to contain oil spilled from the vessel *Cosco Busan*

After the crash, Zheng stayed with the other 23 crewmembers on the ship, which was docked at an anchorage before being shifted for repairs in a San Francisco shipyard. Acting on the advice of attorneys hired by their employer, the crew initially refused to cooperate with the investigators who clambered aboard. The investigators eventually identified six of the men, including Zheng, Li and the four most senior sailors, as targets of material witness warrants. An attorney appointed by Fleet Management's legal team to represent Zheng, Li, and two of the other men accepted service of their arrest warrants. That helped keep the seamen out of jail but required them to disembark from the *Cosco Busan* and remain in the United States, even after their colleagues had taken the repaired boat back out of the bay in late December.

Attorneys for Fleet Management hired Douglas Schwartz, a chipper maritime lawyer with experience representing crew members served with material witness warrants, to represent Master Sun. Schwartz took the leadership role in arguing on behalf of all six crew members, including Zheng and Li. He says he believes the men were "functionally detained."

The Chinese nationals were squirreled away, out of the media spotlight, in hotels and an apartment around Nob Hill, downtown, and the Marina, as deals for their accommodations were secured. Fleet Management and its staffing contractors were required to pay the crewmembers' salaries, living expenses, and cover their health care costs. The seamen were free to roam about the Bay Area, provided with work visas and paid witness fees of $35 to $40 per day. But they received no counseling services to help

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Prisoners of the Cosco Busan

Continued from page 12

them through the confusing, lonely ordeal.

When a material witness is stuck in the United States, they are not generally incarcerated. But it's common for depression to set in, according to Stevenson of the Seamen's Church Institute. "They've got to sit in a strange place and eat fried food for six months," he said. "They don't get told exactly what's going on. Their diet changes and they get bored. They're trained to be seafarers — not to be sitting around waiting to testify in a case."

When the Oakland-based chapter of the Seamen's Church heard that witness warrants had been issued for the men from the *Cosco Busan*, it tried to invite them to their center to use the Internet, receive pastoral and emotional support, and hang out and play pool with other seamen. But their offer was ignored, church officials say. And church officials already had their hands full supporting seven Filipino seamen who were being held as material witnesses in a separate case. Those men were stuck in Northern California after some of them reported that their chief engineer, a Greek national, had ordered waste oil dumped from the engine room of their ship, the 626-foot *Rio Gold*, as it sailed to Oakland from Hawaii. As a reward for reporting the crime, the four whistleblowers jeopardized their careers and lost their freedom for months, but eventually they were rewarded by the US government with more than $60,000 apiece following the successful prosecution of their employer, Malta-based Caddia Shipping Ltd., which was fined $750,000.

Throughout the sojourns of the *Cosco Busan* crew, prosecutors and attorneys for Fleet Management and Cota repeatedly asked US Magistrate Joseph Spero to extend the witness warrants — or agreed to such requests from other lawyers — to keep the men in the country long enough to testify in the trial of their employer and pilot.

The men's ordeal was prolonged because of tardiness by prosecutors, who took four months to bring charges against Cota and more than eight months to file an indictment against Fleet Management. Delays also occurred because aggressive Fleet Management defense attorneys demanded their right to gather every scrap of evidence, Schwartz said, and because of intense public interest in the case. All of those factors helped repeatedly postpone the federal trial of Cota and Fleet Management.

Attorneys for the crew claimed in court that the US government would never accept such treatment of Americans by a foreign government. They argued that their clients' long stays violated their Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable detention and their Fifth Amendment due-process rights. The Supreme Court has never considered this issue, although it has ruled that material witnesses have a right to witness fees. US Magistrate Spero replied that the men were "stuck" in Northern California, but ruled that they were not "detained" because they were not incarcerated.

"The reason, as far as we can tell, that there's almost no case law on the subject of detention versus 'functional detention' is that normally it doesn't last long enough," Schwartz said. "By the time you get it in front of the Ninth Circuit [Court of Appeals] it's moot. If we had realized back in the spring how long this would have dragged out, we would have tried to [illegible] up to get it in front of the Ninth Circuit."

When US Judge Susan Illston pushed back the trial until after the one-year anniversary of the oil spill, however, Spero said the crewmembers could return home after the lawyers took their depositions. During the depositions, which were videotaped in a judge-free federal courtroom, the crewmembers answered questions about their backgrounds and recalled year-old memories through translators. They had already shared the same information multiple times during interviews with accident investigators.

Spero allowed Zhang and Li, the two lowest-ranking and apparently blameless crewmembers, to give their evidence and return home before the other men. The depositions lasted for between three and fourteen days and revealed Fleet Management's role in the accident, according to Cota's attorney. "From all of the crew members' depositions, it became clear that there were significant issues regarding the training they received from Fleet," Jeffrey Bornstein said.

Zhang, who first spotted the bridge, grew miserable and depressed in San Francisco, according to his attorney and others involved in the case. While his colleagues took classes to improve their English and found work at a cramped sushi restaurant in a Japanese mall, Zhang spent his time bored, moping, and sad, resigned to an unfair fate.

Meanwhile, the younger Li, who was held as a witness because he had been controlling the *Cosco Busan*'s rudder when an aggressive, drug-dependent, fully-licensed California superior piloted it into the bridge, grew deeply resentful at times, his attorneys say. His frustration was palpable: [illegible] made fierce by the obviousness of the injustice.

In September, Spero allowed Li to return home briefly so that he could visit his dying 88-year-old grandmother. Spero said the ruling was made because all of the lawyers involved in the multi-party case supported his desperate plea. Li paid a $1,800 bond, agreed to keep close phone contact with the court, and provided his girlfriend's phone number in China.

Zhang and Li returned home to China for good on the same day in late November. At that time, more than one year after the accident, Li's grandmother's ailing heart was still ticking, and she was still alive to welcome her grandson back home to Henan Province.

Today, Fleet Management faces hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines after offering to plead guilty to environmental misdemeanors. If found guilty on felony charges that its officials forged documents to mislead spill investigators, it faces fines of millions of dollars more. And it also will be billed hundreds of millions of dollars for cleanup and environmental restoration costs.

The Vessel Traffic Service officials who silently watched the crash unfold were retrained by the Coast Guard in the rudimentary art of giving orders to pilots to avoid accidents.

John Cota will be fined and sentenced June 19 to up to ten months in prison, after he pleaded guilty to a pair of environmental misdemeanors under a deal with prosecutors. But his incarceration will be briefer than the Kafkaesque odysseys of Zhang and Li, who were trapped in Northern California for more than twelve months because of the drugstore junkie's wildly errant orders. ◆

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ARTS & CULTURE

EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS

Lisa Geduldig

Kosher Comedy, Racy Lineup

"The Color of Funny" strives to represent everyone

Lisa Geduldig is probably most famous for her Kung Pao Kosher Comedy show, a Jewish comedy event that she holds every Christmas at New Asia Restaurant in San Francisco's Chinatown. Geduldig and friends decorate the restaurant as if it were the site of a Bar Mitzvah, hanging dreidel piñatas and blown-up matzoh balls from the ceiling, slipping Yiddish proverbs in the fortune cookies, and adorning the walls with kitsch from Judaica stores. Kung Pao turned out to be such a success that Geduldig decided to expand her empire. In 2000 she started Funny Girlz, featuring different female comics every year. When Bush got re-elected she began holding an annual "Bush Going Away Party," featuring left-wing political material ("I thought there was humor in the fact that he wouldn't go away," said Geduldig, admitting that she'll have to reconceptualize the event in light of the regime change). Her most recent enterprise is **"The Color of Funny,"** a "multi-culty" show featuring comics who represent a variety of ethnic backgrounds, sexualities, and subcultures. All have loosely coalesced around the idea of confronting stereotypes and bringing people together.

The Color of Funny embarks on a three-city tour this week, with a rather unorthodox lineup that features Geduldig, veteran comedian Diane Amos (best known as "the Pine Sol lady"), gay Muslim Iranian comic Ali Mafi (San Francisco show only), Jewish Vietnamese comic Joe Nguyen, Indian comedian (and MIT grad) Dhaya Lakshminarayanan, Latina humorist Marga Gonzalez, and UC Santa Cruz freshman Nathan Habib (Santa Cruz show only). While distinct in style, content, and delivery, all of them have a knack for slipping identity-affirming politics into their bits. Yet they do it in a way that doesn't seem assaultive or preachy. According to Amos, there's no real way to get around the race factor in comedy, since so much of it is about playing on stereotypes anyway. "In the Bay Area we're crazy hip," she said. "But when I'm in other places and I come onstage, I'm the big black woman with braids. I don't know if they're expecting me to talk about 'what my man did to me,'" she said, adopting a fake I-told-you-so accent.

While the multi-cultural theme may seem fairly diffuse — especially on a show where just about every culture is represented in some form — it definitely has a lot of cachet, said Nguyen, whose web domain is VietJew.com. Nguyen admits he's never done a specifically multicultural show. Granted, any show he does is inherently multicultural, by virtue of having a Jewish Vietnamese person on the bill. "I guess that's one of the things I bring to the show," he said. "Or any show."

"The Color of Funny: A Multi-Culty Comedy Show" plays at **Julia Morgan Center for the Arts** (2640 College Ave., Berkeley) on May 30, 8 p.m. $20-$23. KosherComedy.com.

— *Rachel Swan*

FAIRS, FESTIVALS & FUND-RAISERS

1st Wednesday Street Parties With live bands, vendors from local businesses, and offerings from local restaurants. For info, visit PleasantonDowntown.net/events. First Wednesday of every month, 6-9 p.m. Continues through Sept. 2. free. Downtown Pleasanton, Main St., Pleasanton. 925-484-2199.

Chocolate & Chalk Art Festival With a sidewalk chalk art contest. Best drawing will be judged after 4 p.m. Winners will be notified the following day. First prize is $150 with 150 gift certificates awarded for runners up. Plus a Chocolate to-go menu featuring organic café mocha, chocolate mocha ice cream, chocolate truffles as well as savory Delaware snails, spicy chocolate tandoori chicken, and a chocolate foot massage. Sat., May 30, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. free. Gourmet Ghetto, Shattuck Ave. between Rose and Delaware Sts., Berkeley. www.northshattuck.org/

Malcolm X Jazz Festival With live performances by the Freedom Band featuring Howard Wiley, Ravel Murray with the EastSide Arts Alliance Jazz Residency Project, Fuga, and the Abraham Byone trio. Plus a writers' court with graffiti artists and a Hood Games skateboarding contest, a children's court with arts, crafts, and games, a teen court with crafts, community information booths, and vendors; artistic performances, poetic Bboy sessions, speakers and open ciphers. Sat., May 30, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., free. San Antonio Park, 18th Ave. (at Foothill Blvd.), Oakland.

KIDS

Butterfly Week Caterpillars, themed stories, and a different butterfly-inspired art activity every day, through May 29, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., $7-$8. Habitot Children's Museum, 2065 Kittredge St., Berkeley. 510-647-1111. Habitot.org.

Children's Fairyland Weekend Afternoons Featuring arts and crafts, puppet shows, children's theater shows, the animal of the day and more. Saturdays, 11 a.m.; Sundays, 11 a.m., $6. Children's Fairyland, 699 Bellevue Ave. (at Lake Merritt), Oakland. 510-452-2259. Fairyland.org.

Draw My Anime A creativity workshop for kids, grades 2-12. Please preregister. Ongoing, start anytime. Fridays, 4:15-6 p.m., $15/session or $50/four sessions. Frank Bette Center for the Arts, 1601 Paru St., Alameda. 510-523-6957. FrankBetteCenter.org.

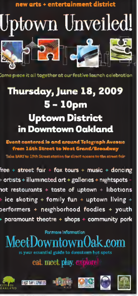
Toddler Jams Singing, movement, and instruments for young children. Fridays, 10:30 a.m., free. Crossroads Community Center & Coffeehouse, 1333 High St., Alameda. 510-864-8890. Crossroadscoffee.org.

Odissi Dance for Kids Beginning Indian classical dance. Saturdays, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Jyoti Kala Mandir College of Indian Classical Arts, 1004 Delaware St., Berkeley. 510-213-3447. Jyotikala.org.

Tot Tuesdays Explore the basics of motion, sound, and light with classes, a sing-along, story time, exhibit exploration, and an age-appropriate planetarium show. To register call 510-336-7345 or email school@chabotspace.org. Choose from three different one-hour sessions. Tue., June 2. $36-$45 for 3 sessions. Chabot Space & Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd., Oakland. 510-336-7373. ChabotSpace.org.

Wild About Books Children's program featuring stories, music, and magic tricks. Saturdays, 10:30 a.m., free. Berkeley Public Library: Central Branch, 2090 Kittredge St. (at Shattuck Ave.), Berkeley. 510-981-6100. BerkeleyPublicLibrary.org.

Wildlife Theater Be a Docent: hear a story and meet an animal. On Sundays, meet more animals and learn with zoo docents. Saturdays, 11:45 a.m.; Sundays, 1:45 p.m., free with zoo admission. Oakland Zoo, 9777 Golf Links Rd., Oakland. 510-632-9525. OaklandZoo.org.



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lyric postmodernisms
poetry flash series
sunday jun 7 at 3pm
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plenty enough suck to go around
cheryl wagner
thursday jun 11 at 7pm
The "This American Life" contributor shares from her new memoir of returning home to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina

the night of the gun
david carr
tuesday jun 18 at 7pm
In this harrowing journalistic memoir a New York Times reporter investigates the story of his own past as a drug addict.

in the kitchen
monica ali
wednesday jun 24 at 7pm
One of the most lauded young British novelists, Ali's character-rich new novel follows the chaotic life of a hotel chef

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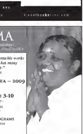
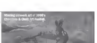


"Compassion is the language that the blind can see and the deaf can hear."
- Amma

PICKS



Winning sidewalk art of 2008's Chocolate & Chalk Art Festival.

Chocolate & Chalk Art Festival

The menu at this year's **Chocolate & Chalk Art Festival** ranges from normal dessert staples (fine wines, truffles, chocolate sorbet), to exotic goodies (chicken mole, Mexican mocha, a carob banana organic dog cookie), to items that might raise an eyebrow even if they don't tickle your palate (chocolate pizza with raisins or Caribbean black bean chocolate soup, anyone?). There are even options for folks who would rather wear chocolate than eat it. Solemates Nail Spa offers to polish your nails a chocolate color, while Paradise Spa and the Acupressure Institute will both provide chocolate hand massages. And gustatory pleasures are only one part of this exciting event, which also includes a sidewalk chalk art contest, vendor booths, live music, capoeira, and clowns. On Saturday, May 30, in Berkeley's Gourmet Ghetto (North Shattuck Ave.). 10 a.m.-5 p.m., free. AnotherBullwinkleShow.com. — *Rachel Swan*

High School Track Championships

The North Coast Section is hosting its track-and-field **Meet of Champions** this weekend at UC Berkeley's **Edwards Stadium** (Fulton St. at Bancroft Way). The best prep athletes from Northern California will be pole-vaulting, high jumping, and discus-throwing against their peers from throughout the region. Friday, May 29 features the "trials" in both the running and field events. Saturday, May 30 will have the finals as more than a dozen boys and girls compete. The annual meet is your chance to see the stars of tomorrow's track and field today. 10 a.m., $8, $6 for students and seniors. CIFNCS.org. — *Kibby Kleiman*

L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato

Aside from its stunning grace and technical rigor, one of the most fascinating aspects of Mark Morris' ***L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*** is that it straddles so many different epochs. Part traditional ballet, part sensual modern dance, the piece incorporates poetry by Milton with a score by the Baroque composer George Frideric Handel and imagery inspired by 18th-century poet and painter William Blake. It's a rather improbable piece for a choreographer of Morris' ilk — he's known for pliant movements and elastic shapes, rather than rigid, canonical forms — but Morris gave the material his own spin when he premiered it in 1988. *L'Allegro* comes to Cal Performances this weekend with a cast of 24 dancers, plus musical accompaniment by the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and the Chamber Chorus of UC Berkeley. Friday, May 29 and Saturday, May 30 (8 p.m.) and Sunday, May 31 (3 p.m.) at **Zellerbach Hall** (UC Berkeley). $36-$82. CalPerfs.berkeley.edu. — *R.S.*

Malcolm X Jazz Festival

Free music festivals are a rare treat in Oakland these days. Even rarer are those that feature hip-hop emcees and spoken word poets alongside jazz royalty. **The Malcolm X Jazz Festival** stands out in particular, both for the amount of latitude it gives to the word "jazz" and the quality of the acts it books. This year's billing includes three of the best tenor players alive. David Murray and Howard Wiley both hail from the East Bay (Murray currently resides in Paris, but returns several times a year); Abraham Burton will fly in from New York City with an electrifying trio that features drummer Nasheet Waits and bassist Eric McPherson. Chicano funk band Fugal will round out the main stage lineup, showing that jazz is both protean and polyglot. As always, the festival will have a wide variety of food vendors, artisans, and community organizations, along with dancers, poets, flyers, DJs, graffiti battles, and a Hood Games skateboarding contest. On Saturday, May 30 in East Oakland's **San Antonio Park** (18th Ave. at Foothill Blvd.). 11 a.m.-7 p.m., free. EastSideArtsAlliance.com — *R.S.*

E&A

LGBT

Dress-Up Wednesdays A social gathering where transgender girls, cross-dressers, and [illegible] are welcome. Dress up, [illegible] lessons, take photos, and get [illegible]. Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m., $15 [illegible]. I Love It, 45873 Warm Springs Blvd. #7, Fremont. 510-656-4738. [illegible]

East Bay Front Runners Join the LGBT group for noncompetitive runs and walks, followed by brunch at a local restaurant. Visit the Web site for weekly locations. Saturdays, 9 a.m., free. EastBayFrontRunners.org. Berkeley Marina, 201 University Ave., Berkeley. [illegible]

LGBT Hip-Hop Night Thursdays, 8:30-11:30 p.m., free. [illegible] Rainbow Room, 21859 Mission Blvd., Hayward. 510-582-8078. [illegible]

LGBT Weight Watchers Meeting E-mail [illegible]@weightwatchers.com for [illegible]. Tuesdays, 6 p.m. Continues through Dec. 31. [illegible] 1570 Chestnut St. [illegible], Berkeley

Mission Gorgeous Song Team [illegible] Tyson, Cassandra Cass, Rusty [illegible], and Diva [illegible]. Fridays, 9 p.m. Continues through Sept. 8. $5. White Horse Inn, 6551 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-652-3820. WhiteHorseBar.com.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Bay Area Befriending Dance Monthly befriending mixer with a coffee and [illegible]. Thu., May 28, 6-8 p.m. $20-$25. Harbor Bay, 1151 Harbor Bay Pkwy, Alameda, Alameda.

Dancing around the Sites Instructors from Oakland's Linden Street Dance Studio present dance lessons in a different style each week, ranging from tango to salsa to waltz. For info, call 510-645-9097 ex. 225. Fridays, 6:30-9:15 p.m. Continues through July 3, free. Jack London Square, 70 Washington St., Oakland. 510-627-1670. JackLondonSquare.com

Yad Pol Klezmer Dance Party Dance [illegible] with live music by the [illegible]. Sun., May 31, 6-8:30 p.m., [illegible]. Jewish Community Center of the East Bay, 1414 Walnut St., Berkeley. 510-848-0237. JCCEB.org.

Steps Near the Lake [illegible] salsa dance with live music by [illegible], plus free salsa dance lessons. Sun., May 31, 1-6 p.m. free. Splash Pad Park, Grand and Lakeshore aves., Oakland.

What Do Men and Women Want? Ongoing Discussion Group Wednesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Continues through June 3, $10. Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley. 510-526-3805.

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SPORTS & OUTDOORS-PARTICIPATORY

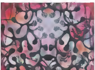
Backpacking 101 Andy Roots teaches the fundamentals of selecting and loading gear, using a water purification system, and bear-proofing food. Wed., June 3, 7 p.m., free. REI Berkeley, 1338 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-527-4140. REI.com

Brushy Peak Hike Hike is 6 miles round trip with a moderately difficult climb. For info, and the LARPD [illegible] office at 925-960-2400. Sat., May 30, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Brushy Peak Regional Preserve, north end of Laughlin Rd., Livermore.

Chaparral Spirit Heritage Trees Hike Meet at Three Springs Entry. For info call [illegible]. EBParks.org. Sat., May 30, 9:30 a.m., free. Chaparral Spring, 10000 Brook Creek Rd., Castro [illegible].

Livermore's Biggest Loser Group fitness training, nutrition guidance, and lifestyle programs [illegible]. For more information or to register, visit LARPD.dst.ca.us or call 925-373-5700. Through July 4, [illegible]. Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave., Livermore. 925-373-5700.

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES



Margaret Chavigny's *Blossom*

Waxworks

National juried encaustic show exhibits a rich, versatile medium.

Encaustic — powdered pigment suspended in a matrix of heated wax and damar varnish — may be an ancient medium dating back to Egyptian times (when it was used for coffin lid portraits of the dead that still look fresh), but its irresistible tactile surfaces and seductive spatial depths are eternally beguiling to artist and viewer alike. With that tug between the optical and the tactile, it's especially apt for collage works suggesting time and memory, like the ghostly flag collages of the 1950s that Jasper Johns made from embalmed newspaper clippings. Eighty-three artists were selected for *Working in Wax* by juror and artist Eileen P. Goldenberg. Their dynamic paintings and sculptures suggest that encaustic will endure and thrive — perhaps even after American culture, too long bedeviled by complacent denial, is long gone.

Encaustic can be used unpigmented as a coating for collage elements. Sharon Kyle Kuhn, Sandra Beard, Carol Ware, Margaret Berry, Francesca Pera, K. Rhynus Clark, Cathy Valentine, Mary Mortimer, Judith Williams, and Rodney Thompson coat objects in order to add structural strength or to implant them physically and visually into their compositions. Berry's coated slices of kiwi, cucumber, carrot, and eggplant would be the paradigm of waxen enclosure. Encaustic can also be mixed with pigment and used either in thin layers or as a thick paste, just as oil paint can be mixed to varying viscosities. Lisa Meyer Kairos and Margaret Chavigny mix thin paint contrasted with a base of clear wax into which the viewer peers that lends pictorial depth. Mary Marks, Margo Mullen, Cindy Roe, Julie Nelson, Jan Davidson, and Francesca Pera use thick encaustic for its pronounced textural qualities; it can imitate bark or asphalt, or be applied in geometric arrays of blobs.

From high relief it's but a step into sculpture. Encaustic can be scraped, carved, and cast; Carol Gimbroff juxtaposes wax and cast glass models of cannoles and miniskirts, while Margaret Niven creates a pyramid of soft, waxen bottles and a sea anemone composed of cast wax human fingers — a digital sphere. Wendy Aikin and Judy Stabile fashion an entire family room from wax and other materials, from furniture down to tabletop contents (teapot, glasses, keys, sugar cube dish). Jessica Martin creates imaginary objects: in one piece, two stacks of pancakelike disks rise like slime molds to meet each other and merge; in another, a waxen cloud/brain/jellyfish perched on four spindly legs emits progeny that hang from web lines or tentacles.

Goldenberg will discuss encaustic at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, June 10 (RSVP required). ***Working in Wax*** runs through June 27 at **Bedford Gallery** (1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek). BedfordGallery.org or 925-295-1417.

— *DeWitt Cheng*

ART GALLERIES

ACCO Warehouse Space. *Challenge of Champions* Cyd Jenkins art exhibit commenting on Oakland homicides. Through Dec. 28. 1120 Talbot St., Emeryville. ABCTANKstudio.com.

Bancroft Street Windows Gallery. *Portraits from Near and Far* With portrait paintings by Lise Cutwright and Susan Mambosa. Through May 30. 2018 Addison St., Berkeley. 510-981-7548.

Alphonse Gooler Gallery. *You, Me, and Everyone We Know* Nineteen artists present figure paintings, sculpture, lithographs, photography, apparel, beer, acrylic jewelry, etchings, illustrations, and assemblage. Through June 8. 2546 Bancroft Way (Berkeley), Berkeley. 510-653-0389.

Alston Arbor. *Pleasanton Art League 40th Show* May 29-31. 3488 Old Foothill Rd., Pleasanton.

Oakland Cafe. *Fabric Objectified* Ivey Perry presents a series of drawings of and about of clothing on a hanger to raise questions about whether "whitewashed" fabric can convey sexuality. Through June 3. 414 14th St., Oakland.

Bedford Gallery. *Working in Wax* Juried exhibition curated by Eileen P. Goldberg. Through June 21. ***Working in Wax*** National juried exhibition with waxed figures. Through June 21. 1601 Civic Dr. (Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts), Walnut Creek. 925-295-1417. BedfordGallery.org.

Berkeley Art Center. *Go-Motion: Video Installation by Cheryl Ossler and Thiele Kammerel* Video installation about movement. Through June 1. 1275 Walnut St. (in Live Oak Park), Berkeley. 510-644-6893. BerkeleyArtCenter.org.

Berkeley Art Museum. *Human/Nature: Artists Respond to a Changing Planet* Exhibition explores relationship between human communities and the natural world. Featuring work by Mark Dion, Ana Prvacki, Rigo Marogliano-Ovalle, Amy Franceschini, Rigo 23, Sean Kinney, Rigo Thater and Xu Bing. Through Sept. 27. 2626 Bancroft Way (UC Berkeley campus), Berkeley. 510-642-0808. BAMPFA. berkeley.edu.

Cal State East Bay University Art Gallery. *Annual Faculty Exhibition Pre-Column Man Sculptures* Through June 4. ***Annual Student Juried Exhibition*** Through June 4. 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd. (CSUEB campus), Hayward. 510-885-3299. Class. CSUEastBay.edu/artgallery.

Gaslite Woodblock Gallery. *Seasonals* Paintings and intaglio prints by Emily Payne and Sevie Tomakura. Through May 31. 1809-B Fourth St., Berkeley. 510-548-1818. GasliteWoodblock.com.

Chandra Cerrito Contemporary. *Surface Tension* Show on surface abstraction and 3D illusions features work by Jan Sarcles, Christopher Martin, Caroline Wachtstedt, and Allan Peters. Through May 30. 25 Grand Ave., Oakland. 415-577-7537. ChandraCerrito.com.

Christensen Heller Gallery. *Soft Sculptures* Featuring work by Emily Peters. Through July 8. 5429 College Ave., Oakland. 510-655-5852.

Craft and Cultural Arts Gallery. *Freshly Cut Art Show* Sort seasoned illustrations by Sandy Garcia and Jonique Hull. Through June 29. 1515 Clay St. (State of California Office Building atrium), Oakland. 510-622-4190. OaklandCulturalArts.org.

Eclectic Gallery. *The All-Girls Show* Sculpture, paintings, mixed media and photography by more than 30 female artists. Through June 20. ***Take Home To Dreamology: The Art Works of Kallie Mo-Shon*** Featuring ancient Victorian images and recycled materials into her signature creations & "Lady Bugs." Through June 20. 13082 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. 510-384-1201. EclecticGallery.com.

Expressions Gallery. *Spring Has Sprung* Group art show. Through June 5. 2035 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-644-4930. ExpressionsGallery.org.

Heart Center. *Kundalinian* With paintings by Philippe Janssens, plus sculpture and jewelry by Victoria Sarpo. Through June 29. 1801 Calais Pl. (#110), Oakland. 510-536-1700. TheHeartCenter.com.

Gallery Eclectic. *Working in the Crystal Light* Solo show featuring multi-media "Working" and installation by Kristine Ripens. Through May 31. 2912 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-3645 ex. 220.

Grace North Church. *Photographs of A Floating World* Linda Ekstra Philips presents 16"x20" pigment ink prints. Closing reception May 31, 1-7 p.m. Through May

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PICKS

Afton Badger's

East Bay Open Studios

More than four hundred Alameda and Contra Costa County artists are opening their studios to visitors on June 6-7 and 13-14; samples of their work, in all media and styles, are now on display at Pro Arts. If you're staycationing this summer, support your artist neighbors by perusing, schmoozing, and catching (even for the cheese, stay for the broccoli). Check out the show, pick up a free directory with photos, web sites, and maps, and plan your excursions. Some show standouts: **Rebecca Garcia-Gonzalez, Martin Webb, Deborah Barrett, Alisja Coe, Deborah Harris, Hadley Williams, Elena Zolotnitsky, Liz Maxwell, Bart Trinkel, the Pfeiffer Sisters, Lisa Boernsen, Vicky Mei Chen, Terry Furry, Benjamin Chan, Afton Badger** and **James Lavekin.** Several art-worlders dared I-f simulate itineraries this year, so decide for yourself if our eyes or brains need examining. ***East Bay Open Studios*** runs through June 14 at **Pro Arts Gallery** (550 2nd St., Oakland). ProArts Gallery.org or 510-763-4361. — *DeWitt Cheng*

Intimate Observer/ Speed and Ecstasy

Two Oaklanders explore the urban landscape. **Jill McKennon**'s paintings and drawings, collectively entitled ***Intimate Observer***, depict her Jingletown neighborhood as tapestries of color and texture ("Fourth St., Dusk," "Ford St., Afternoon"). Thoughts of ... vistas ... the visual strolling, while the meandering perspectives and heightened colors exude a folk-art expansiveness, with everything touched by grace. Rousseau's Paris may come to mind, but with American energy and drive symbolized by the urban river" overpass ("Cotton Mill, Twilight"). **Jamie Morgan**'s paintings and pastels entitled ***Speed and Ecstasy*** explore the silent mystery and beauty of unpeopled roads, bridges, and parking structures ("Park Street Bridge," "Distant House, Empty Lot"). The works' compositional rigor and poetic feeling for light may remind viewers of Hopper and Sheeler. "On Ramp, Off Ramp" depicts parallel dark and illuminated roadways streaked by taillights that diverge under a full moon, framed by black trees. *Shows* run through May 30 at **Mercury 20 Gallery** (25 Grand Ave., Oakland). MercuryTwenty.com or 510-701-4620. — *D.C.*

Surface Tension

Surface tension is the molecular bond that makes a water membrane sticky and impenetrable. **Chandra Cerrito Gallery** is showing four artists who play with 2D surface abstraction and 3D spatial illusionism. The blank walls in **Jen Garrido**'s paintings have an improvised look, but the rectilinear sculptural shapes they construct are spatially ambiguous like Albers geometric optical illusions. **Christopher Martin** pours paint on a Plexiglas; the organic textures seen from the reverse side suggest botany and geology. **Donnane Nieberguil**'s abstract acrylic paintings, with their flattened biomorphic shapes and jazzy colors, marry Pop, cartooning and Art Nouveau sensibilities. **David Allan Peters** engineers layered acrylic paint; he carves events into his paintings on panel, exposing the sedimentation, or he sections his topographies and piles the booklike forms (reminiscent of marbleized endpapers) into small sculptures of mountains. ***Surface Tension*** runs through May 30 at **Chandra Cerrito Gallery** (25 Grand Ave., Oakland). ChandraCerrito.com/site or 415-577-7537. — *D.C.*

M&G

31. 3138 Dinter St., Berkeley. 510-548-2153.

Greenfolding Institute, Beyond Americanos: Group show with painting, sculpture, photography and [illegible]. Through June 30. 1933 University Ave. 2nd Fl., Berkeley. 510-876-0016.

KAS [illegible]: [illegible] Sky: Reviving the Art of Mongol Zurag Artist and calligrapher [illegible] adapts a traditional [illegible] aesthetic. Through July 15. 2773 Fulton St. [illegible] Berkeley. 510-6[illegible]. KAS [illegible].edu.

Adeneion Projects, The Sains Fields [illegible] and Michael Meyers present [illegible] sculptures and abstract cartography. Through June 20. **[illegible] and Kevin [illegible]** Presenting multimedia work that [illegible] the conventions of filmmaking. Through June 20. 2300 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-444-8160, [illegible].

Kala Art Institute, [illegible] Group show with new works in print media, paper sculpture, digital collage, photography and video. Through June 21. 1060 Heinz Ave., Berkeley. 510-549-2977. Kala.org.

La Peña Cultural Center, [illegible] Art & [illegible] [illegible] exhibit featuring work by Lincoln Cushing, [illegible], Favianna Rodriguez, & [illegible]. Sun., May 31, 3:30 p.m. free. 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568. LaPena.org.

[illegible] Studio, [illegible] Light: Featuring photography by Gary Wilson. Through May 30. 4758 Morton St., Emeryville. 510-428-2304.

Lobot Gallery, Z-Axis Group show explores architecture in a variety of media and combines various aspects of our built environment. Curated by Eric Araujo and Pella Campbell and featuring work by [illegible], Dan Grayber, Peter Janet, Steven M. King, Whitney Lynn, [illegible], John K. Melvin, [illegible], [illegible], Matt Volla, [illegible]. Through June 1. 1600 Campbell St., Oakland. 510-282-2122. LobotGallery.com.

Lucky Ju Ju Pinball Art Gallery, "Rock n' Roll!: The Outsider Art of Dennis Sargent" Homemade instruments made from pinball and other recycled found objects. Through June 2. $6-$10. 1134 Santa Clara St., Alameda. 510-205-0793. [illegible].com.

MC Art Works Gallery, John Woodwood: What We Take for Granted Solo photograph exhibition. Through May 31. 10344 San Pablo Ave., E. Cerrito. 510-528-1843.

Berkeley 20 Gallery, Intimate Observer: Paintings and drawings by Jill McLennan. Through May 31. **Speed and Ecstasy** Paintings and pastel drawings by Jamie Morgan. Through May 30. 25 Grand Ave., Oakland. 510-464-7165. MercuryTwenty.com.

Mills College Art Institute, Young Americans: MFA exhibition curated by Terri Cohn. [illegible] work by Andrew Witrak, Anna Vaught, Brian Caraveo, [illegible], Esther [illegible], Joseph Senyhill, Kate Pupello, Leigh Merrill, [illegible], and Stewart Peppon. Through May 31. **Young Americans: Mills College MFA Exhibition** With line drawings, and wondrous large-scale photographs, sculptures, portraits, [illegible] paintings, and installations by 10 artists. Through May 31. 5000 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland. 510-430-2164.

PhotoCentral Gallery and Darkroom, Ima Donez: Five Decades of Photography Through June 11. 1099 E St., Hayward. 510-881-6721. PhotoCentral.org.

Photolab Gallery, B Colors Color photographs by Fraser Bonnell, Kim Kaufman-Cohen, Cathy Lorraine, Martha Snider and Ted Williams. Through June 20. 2235 Fifth St., Berkeley. 510-644-1400. Photolaboratory.com/gallery.htm

San Pablo Arts Gallery, Natural Connections Prints by Shae Ana DeBose and Celia Werthing, plus ceramics by Karen Wenzel. Through June 14. One [illegible] Sq., 13831 San Pablo Ave. [illegible] Hall Civic Center, San Pablo. 510-636-7001. ci.San-Pablo.ca.us.

Swarm Rosetta + Gallery, Rosetta [illegible] Solo exhibition by Joseph Smolinski [illegible] graphite on paper plus sculpture-based installation and video based on the contemporary landscape. Through June 28. **Dreamland** [illegible] and Hi-Ja [illegible] present video installations that combine historical materials with new technology. Through June 21. 560 2nd St., #41, Oakland. 510-839-2187. SwarmStudios.net.

The Compound, Robin [illegible] Featuring [illegible] paintings and sewing sculptures by [illegible], resident and [illegible] painter of Oakland's Marvel Organic Tea. Through May 31. [illegible] San Pablo Ave., Oakland. 510-[illegible]. TheCompoundGallery.com. ●

THEATER & DANCE

THEATER & PERFORMING ARTS

Cabaret Mindy Cooper directs this Center REPertory Company production of the Broadway musical. Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m., Saturdays, Sundays, 2:30 p.m., Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Sundays, 7:30 p.m. Continues through June 27. $37-$45. Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek, 925-943-7469, [illegible]

Faust Part One Aurelia Cohen and Mark Jackson adapt Jackson's interpretation of Johann Wolfgang Goethe's Faust: *Der Tragödie Erster Teil*. Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m. Continues through June 21. $18-$25. The Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-6500, ShotgunPlayers.org.

Impact Briefs: Puberty Collection of dozen ten-minute plays about different moments of adolescence. Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m. Continues through June 6. $12-$15. LaVal's Subterranean Theatre, 1834 Euclid Ave. (at Hearst St.), Berkeley, 510-464-4468.

Lady Windermere's Fan Patricia Inabnet directs this romantic comedy by Oscar Wilde about the [illegible], public morality and private virtue. Starting May 30. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m., Sundays, 2:30 p.m. Continues through July 4. $35. Masquers Playhouse, 105 Park Pl., Point Richmond, 510-232-4031, Masquers.org.

Misanthrope Gary Graves directs this Central Works Method play, Molière's comedy about a man who despises the world. Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m., Sundays, 5 p.m. Continues through June 21. $25. Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Ave., Berkeley, 510-558-1381, BerkeleyCityClub.com.

Performance Drills Showcase of advanced [illegible] work. Starting May 28. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m., Sun., May 31, 2 p.m.; Sun., June 7, 8 p.m. Continues through June 7. $5-$10. Cal State East Bay University Theatre, 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd., Hayward, CSUEastBay.edu.

Romeo and Juliet Jonathan Moscone directs the California Shakespeare Theater's *Romeo* showcase of Shakespeare's *Romeo* tragedy. Starting May 28. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m., Thu., May 28, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 8 p.m., Tuesdays-Thursdays, 7:30 p.m., Sat., June 20, 2 p.m. Continues through June 21. $40-$66. Bruns Memorial Amphitheater, 100 Gateway Blvd. (off Highway 24 east of Caldecott Tunnel), Orinda, 510-548-9666, CalShakes.org.

The Spitfire Grill Kimberley Wade directs this Contra Costa Civic Theatre production, based on the film by Lee David Zlotoff. The story centers on one Percy Talbot as she tries to settle down and gain acceptance in the small town of Gilead. Thursdays-Saturdays, 8:15 p.m., Sundays, 2:15 p.m. Continues through May 31. $28. Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek, 925-943-7469, [illegible]

More Listings Online
Get info about dozens more theatrical events
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LIVE VARIETY

The Showcase Oakland Public art, live music, and live lecturing work by more than 20 local artists. Sat., May 30, 7-9:30 p.m. Free. Middle Harbor Shoreline Park, 7th St. at Middle Harbor Rd., Oakland, 510-568-PARK.

COMEDY

All-Pro Berkeley Showcase Wednesdays, 8 p.m., $10; free for college students w/ ID. Cobb's Comedy Club, 915 Columbus Ave., San Francisco, 415-928-4320, CobbsComedy.com.

The Color of Funny: A Multi Berkeley Comedy Issue Kung Fu Tumbler Comedy presents comedians Oscar Arenas, Mark Cornelio, Joe Nguyen, Rhaye Leighenmoneyman, and Leo Goldsby. Sat., May 30, 8 p.m. $20-$23. Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, 2640 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-8542, JuliaMorgan.org.

Comedy Night hosted by Tony Sparks. Thursdays, 7 p.m. Free. Brainwash Cafe, 1122 Folsom St., San Francisco, 415-861-3663, Brainwash.com.

Comedy Off Broadway With a rotating cast of comedians featured on HBO, Comedy Central, Late Night Shows. For info, visit ComedyOffBroadwayOakland.com. Fridays, 8 p.m. Continues through Dec. 31. $10. Washington Inn, 495 10th St., Oakland, 510-452-1776.

Comedy Showcase w/ Matt Meyard. Sign up at 7:30 p.m. Mondays, 8 p.m. Free. Annex Room, 406 Clement St., San Francisco, 415-387-6344, Rock-It-Room.com.

Craig Shoemaker Thu., May 28, 7:30 p.m.; Fri., May 29, 7:30 & 9:30 p.m.; Sat., May 30, 7 & 9:30 p.m.; Sun., May 31, 7 p.m., $25-$40. Tommy T's Comedy & Steakhouse, 5104 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton, 925-227-1800.

Comedy Wand Green Lips: SFFT improv show Mondays, 9 p.m. $5. San Francisco Comedy College, 414 Mason St. #705, San Francisco, 415-921-2051, SFComedyCollege.com.

Open Mic Comedy presented by SF Standup. Tuesdays, 6-9 p.m. Free. Annie's Social Club, 917 Folsom St., San Francisco, 415-974-1585, AnniesSocialClub.com.

Open Mic Comedy Night Wednesdays, 8:30 p.m. Free. Englander Sport Pub, 101 Parrott St., San Leandro, 510-357-3571, EnglanderPub.com.

Pizza & Love Comedy Showcase Fridays, 8 p.m. $7. Spud's Pizza, 3290 Adeline St., Berkeley, 510-595-0795, SpudsPizza.net.

The Oakland Event comedy variety show hosted by Pace Rosario. Last Saturday of every month. 7:30-10 p.m. $7. Make-Out Room, 3225 22nd St., San Francisco, 415-647-2888, MakeOutRoom.com.

SF Comedy Showcase Sundays, 8 p.m. $8. Punch Line, 444 Battery St., San Francisco, 415-397-4337, SFPunchlineComedyClub.com.

SFFT: The Laughtermath featuring a variety of improv, sketch, stand-up, short films, & special guests. Thursdays, 8-9:30 p.m. $15. San Francisco Comedy College, 414 Mason St. #705, San Francisco, 415-921-2051, SFComedyCollege.com. ■

PICKS

Impact Briefs: Puberty

In its latest collection of short plays, Berkeley's Impact Theatre challenged itself to make puberty just a little less dreadful. The seven plays in *Impact Briefs: Puberty* have all the awkwardness of a Seventies-era sex-ed film (you can almost hear the reel getting stuck in the projector), but some of them are genuinely clever. Diana Bertinelli's "Binkie My Binkie" provides an imaginative satire of teen cybersex, while Cheshire Isaacs depicts a worst-case wet-dream scenario to great comic effect. Best of the bunch is David Kangatvelli's "The Talk," which puts a new spin on the old birds-and-bees (think how that conversation might have gone down in the *Twilight*). In between sketches the actors read sex questions contributed by local middle and high school students. Hilarity ensues. Through June 6 at LaVal's **Subterranean Theatre** (1834 Euclid Ave., Berkeley). ImpactTheatre.com — *Rachel Swan*

Gentlemen of Leisure.

Joel Sigel/ [illegible]

Shortlived 2.0

The crew at PlanetFight Productions knows how to pander to an audience accustomed to YouTube clips and rapid-fire status updates. Why subject those folks to a full-length, character-driven play when you can give them eight punchy shorts in about the same amount of time? Enter *Shortlived 2.0*, PlanetFight's second playwriting competition, comprising twelve two-week rounds with eight plays per round. Audience members get to cast judgment and decide who advances to the next round. It's actually a fair order because these plays are all very well written (and well-executed for that matter by actors who have to learn four new plays every two weeks). They're smart, imaginative, and contemporary, using current slang and modern technological devices (e.g., people Tweet each other and have cell phones). Many of them use to-pical themes — such as wiretapping — to move the plot forward. Most come from relatively unknown writers, including some who have never seen their work produced onstage. Yet there's nothing to mark them as amateurs. Were it not for the playwright bios, you'd probably never know. Through June 27 at **Studio 250** (Off-Market Theaters, 965 Mission St., San Francisco). PlanetFight.com — *R.S.*

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Marika Kuzma, director
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Zellerbach Hall Tickets start at $34

On precious few occasions in each generation, a piece of art appears and is instantly recognized as a work for the ages, with the power to transform the way we see the world around us. Such a landmark is Mark Morris's brilliant and majestic *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*. Set to Handel's oratorio of the same name and featuring 24 dancers, a full orchestra and chorus, and four vocal soloists, Morris's masterpiece returns to Cal Performances by overwhelming popular demand.

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"The most gorgeous Kingdom of the Shades imaginable." [illegible]

Russia's legendary Bolshoi Ballet returns under new artistic director Yuri Burlaka, a dynamic talent known for his extraordinary revivals of 19th-century dance classics. Rarely seen in the Bay Area, *La Bayadère* unfolds against the exotic backdrop of [illegible], culminating in the radiant choreography of "The Kingdom of the Shades." Accompanied by Berkeley Symphony Orchestra, [illegible] features sumptuous sets and costumes and such [illegible] Svetlana Zakharova, Nikolai Tsiskaridze, Maria [illegible], Natalia Osipova and Andrei Uvarov.
[illegible] by The Bernard Osher Foundation

Ex Machina
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Tue–Fri, June 9–12, 8 pm; Sat, June 13, 2 pm & 8 pm
Zellerbach Playhouse $75

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[illegible]

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THEATER

LIAR'S CLUB

Central Works' *Misanthrope* turns a comedy of manners into a web of deception

By Rachel Swan

Molière's 1666 play *Le Misanthrope ou l'Atrabilaire amoureux* had a moral subtext, in that it skewered the artificiality of the 17th-century French elite. The play's moral compass is Alceste, a curmudgeon whose scorn for humanity gets quite irritating for the people who have to listen to him, but who nonetheless comes across as the play's most honest character. Alceste is a predecessor to the guy in *Li'l Abner* who walks around with a rain cloud over his head. He hates people and social niceties, and he's incapable of not speaking the truth. He's competing with three other men for the hand of gorgeous glittery Célimène, who represents everything about society that Alceste despises. (She's an unabashed and genteel flirt.) It's a match that would obviously never work, and everyone can see that except for Alceste. Still, you want to root for the guy even when he gets raked over the coals for criticizing a love sonnet written by one of Célimène's other suitors. He's a misanthrope, and a bit of a douche bag, but he's the one character who grounds all of his actions in his principles. Transplanted to contemporary society, he'd probably be a journalist.

Or so thought Gary Graves, who wrote Central Works' modern retelling of *Misanthrope* in 2002. In Graves' version Alceste is Alan (played by Darren Bridgett), a jaded city reporter who sits in his armchair chugging Pepto-Bismol as though it were an energy drink, and imprecating against humanity. Célimène is Celia (Deborah Fink), the fashionable widow of a rich businessman who, at age 35, suddenly finds herself uninhibited and besotted by the single life. Her various suitors (save for Alan, of course) are agglomerated in the character of Phil (Michael Navarra), a rich party boy who seems incapable of even reading a love sonnet, much less writing one. Phil drives a V4 Roadster that Alan likens to "a big blue penis." He claims not to be a trust fund baby, but has all the tell-tale signs of one, from the flashy suits to the apparent lack of real employment. He and Alan propose to Celia on the same night, setting the stage for sure disaster.

Show Details

Misanthrope runs through June 21 at Berkeley City Club (2315 Durant Ave.). $14-$25. CentralWorks.org.

Graves' script is a condensation of the original, in the sense that it occurs over a three-day period and allows a lot of the exposition to take place outside the action of the play. A good move on his part, since it not only gives *Misanthrope* an air of moral ambiguity, it also makes the truth intentionally hazy. In this version most of the important plot details — save for the two marriage proposals — happen off stage. So the characters constantly have to explain themselves to each other and to the audience. Thus, their dialogue always seems like games of cross-examination and cover-up. Phil insists to Alan that he wasn't born into wealth but stumbled upon it. Celia blames an unhappy previous marriage for her current party-girl behavior — and for the fact that she's a prime suspect in her ex-husband's murder. Alan tells the other characters that he got fired from the city paper for refusing to write puff pieces and defying his high-powered editor. The characters constantly dissemble, withholding information or revealing it in a canny way. Even Alan doesn't seem thoroughly convinced that the stuff he's saying is true.

Misanthrope requires some patience from the audience, but it results in a bigger payoff.

Thus, part of the pleasure in *Misanthrope* is watching all those delicious moments when the characters get caught in a lie. Bridgett's Alan is the hardest to figure out. His contempt for other human beings seems heartfelt, but his desire to impress Celia — coupled with his recent expulsion from the newspaper — makes him seem not entirely trustworthy. Phil has the countenance of an utterly vapid character, but beneath the sunglasses and the big ear he's clearly a lot more underhanded, judging from the way he tries to swipe Celia from a more respectable suitor (apparently, we later learn, because he wants to bilk her out of an inheritance). Celia, meanwhile, is the ultimate con artist and consummate victim of *Misanthrope*, and Fink plays her with alacrity. Dazzled by the bachelorette lifestyle, she prances around in a pair of silver stilettos, cosmo in hand, beguiling both her suitors and always trying to smooth things over. When confronted, she flinches. Fink is a world-class flincher.

The original *Misanthrope* was about honesty and the problem of overusing it. Graves' version, in contrast, is largely about deception, to the point that every scrap of dialogue sounds like prevarication. Still, it's a play that requires its audience to place a lot of trust in the three characters, who are burdened with telling their own back stories and with describing what's going on in the other room. We also rely on them to reveal big things about themselves in small ways: Celia with her shrieks and her deer-in-the-headlights expressions, Phil by rolling his eyes and looking askance, and Alan by surreptitiously slipping the Pepto-Bismol bottle in his coat pocket, as though to hide his insecurities. Graves' *Misanthrope* tries to conceal and reveal things at the same time, so the moral — if there is one — remains opaque. It's tricky to pull off and requires a little patience on the audience's behalf. But that makes for a greater payoff when the characters get exposed and their delusions start to unravel. ●

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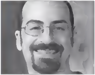

Matthew Amster-Burton

Pad Thai, Baby

Matthew Amster-Burton was determined to raise a foodie

What dad doesn't hope his kids will grow up loving at least some of the same things he does? We've all met those guys who buy their toddlers tiny guitars and teach their infants to shriek "Touchdown!" For **Matthew Amster-Burton**, it was food. Five years ago, when his wife first told him she was pregnant, he was working at what he calls "the world's greatest job — restaurant critic for a daily newspaper." Even on those days when he didn't dine out on dim sum, kimchi, kebabs, and other delights, *The Seattle Times* critic avidly cooked his own elaborate and exotic fare — from green papaya salad to bacon-studded Brussels sprouts. While other adults dread other aspects of impending parenthood — sleepless nights, soy, and diapers — Amster-Burton had something else to cringe about. "All I knew about baby food was that it came in a jar and looked like washed-out fingerpaints." (He found puréed meat "especially gross.") Even imagining the onset of solid foods, a few years down the road, failed to cheer him. Having spent his own childhood devoted to "pizza, burgers, and hot dogs," he was darned if he would be "trapped into eating them in rotation out of some sense of family solidarity until our child went to college."

Determined to sidestep that fate, Amster-Burton embarked on a project whose chronicle is his new book, *Hungry Monkey: A Food-Loving Father's Quest to Raise an Adventurous Eater*, which he will discuss at **Books Inc.** (1344 Park St., Alameda) on Friday, May 29. In the book, he charts little Iris' progress from breast milk directly to warm steamed milk flavored with almond syrup. "What a hipster." Soon it was piroshkis from a Russian bakery near his home. "Luckily," he notes, "they had a club card." Taken to a Chinese restaurant, Iris "gobbled fish and tofu." At a sushi place, "she eviscerated the spicy tuna roll, scooping out the core of fish and rice and leaving us the seaweed. Suddenly we had a baby who chose pad Thai instead of strained peas, Szechuan fish instead of puréed squash."

Smart baby. Ditching baby food almost entirely, Amster-Burton and his wife simply fed Iris portions of their own meals, stopping only to "mash, chop, or blend the food so our toothless little hatchling could eat it." He didn't want to put anything on the table that Iris couldn't share, so steak was out: Even chopped, it's too chewy.

Fortified with recipes and one bizarre [illegible], it's a memoir about babies and food, but also about that universal — and too-often-elusive — parent-child bond. Sharing food, Amster-Burton remembers, "was the first opportunity for Iris and me to share an experience and enjoy it for the same reasons. But I like enchiladas. Iris likes enchiladas. We can agree on enchiladas." 6:30 p.m., free. BooksInc.net

— *Anneli Rufus*

LECTURES

Ask Not DVD screening of the film by Johnny Symons about the US Military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. Wed., May 27, 6:30 p.m., $5-$8. James Moore Theatre, Oakland Museum of California (Oak and 10th sts.), Oakland. 510-238-2200, MuseumCA.org.

Bhopal Survivors Tour Commemorating survivors of the 1984 lethal gas leak from the Union Carbide pesticide factory in Bhopal, India. Wed., May 27, 12:30-2:30 p.m., free. Women of Color Resource Center, 1611 Telegraph Ave. (Ste. 303), Oakland.

Cardiovascular Health Health talk by Sue Nadeamel of the Cal State East Bay Department of Physical Education & Kinesiology. Sat., May 30, 11 a.m., free. Hayward Public Library, 835 C St., Hayward. 510-293-8685, Library.hayward-ca.gov

Ellen Tauscher and the Second [illegible] Lecture by congresswoman Ellen Tauscher and scholar Harold Smith. Thu., May 28, 7:30 p.m., $7-$10. Veterans Memorial Building, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. 925-283-1153.

Green Certification and Certifications: Items You Need to Know Networking event, dinner, and presentation. Tue., June 2, 5:30 p.m., $15-$20. Community Bank, 1750 Broadway, Oakland. [illegible]

Training for Transition Training and discussion covers the challenges of peak oil, climate change and economic instability. May 30-31, 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., $215-$235. Humanist Hall, 390 27th St., Oakland. 510-451-5818, HumanistHall.net.

LITERARY EVENTS

[illegible] Discussing Voracious. Thu., May 28, 7 p.m., free. El Sobrante Library, 4191 Appian Way, El Sobrante. 510-374-3991, www.contra-costa.lib.ca.us/

Bay Area Free Book Exchange Placing unwanted books with the people who want them. Saturdays, Sundays, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Continues through Dec. 31, free. Book Exchange, 10520 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. 510-526-1841.

[illegible] The Blog of Writing 13th annual Effie Lee Morris lecture by poet, [illegible]. Tue., June 2, 6 p.m., free. Oakland Main Library, 125 14th Street, Oakland.

California of the Past Digital storytelling station online, people to record [illegible]. Daily, free. Hayward Public Library, 835 C St., Hayward. 510-293-8685, Library.hayward-ca.gov

[illegible] Discussing [illegible]. Thu., May 28, 7:30 p.m., free. Books Inc., 1344 Park St., Alameda. 510-522-2226, BooksInc.net

Good Enough for Film Screenings: The Devil Wears Prada Wed., June 3, 6 p.m., free. Hayward Public Library, 835 C St., Hayward. 510-293-8685, Library.hayward-ca.gov

Matthew Amster-Burton Discussing Hungry Monkey. Fri., May 29, 6:30 p.m., free. Books Inc., 1344 Park St., Alameda. 510-522-2226, BooksInc.net

[illegible] Celebrating the release of [illegible] new [illegible]. Thu., May 28, 6-8 p.m., free. Comic Relief, 2026 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-843-5002, ComicRelief.net

Michelle Richmond and Meg Waite Clayton Reading from their novels just issued in paperback, *No One You Know* and *The Wednesday Sisters*, respectively. Thu., May 28, 7:30 p.m., free. Mrs. Dalloway's Literary and Garden Arts, 2904 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-704-8222, MrsDalloways.com

Middle East Studies Group Call [illegible] at 510-393-2542 for more info. Sundays, 3-5 p.m., free. Grand Lake Neighborhood Center, 530 Lake Park Ave., Oakland.

New Audio Book Downloads A new service offered through the library's improved web site. Features include an online reference librarian, catalogue and database access, search box, pull-down menus, and links. Daily. Oakland Public Library, Main Branch, 125 14th St., Oakland. 510-238-3134, OaklandLibrary.org.

Sharing Books We Love [illegible] take turns discussing a book that inspired them. Led by Cyndi Clymer. Last Wednesday of every month, 12:30 p.m.,

PICKS

Book Sale

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Carter Stroud

He served as Alameda's city attorney and litigated for years for the Port of Oakland. In *Natural Selection's Paradox: The Outlaw Gene, the Religion of Money, and the Origin of Evil*, which he discusses at **Books Inc.** (1344 Park St., Alameda) on Thursday, May 28, Alameda resident **Carter Stroud** weaves myth, faith, and science into a theory about humanity's road to ruin. 7:30 p.m. Free. BooksInc.net — *A.R.*

Steven Nightingale

A pa[illegible] a la[illegible] a professor on the lam, his professor's daughter, and the daughter's lover: A co[illegible] ed crew heads west to help a cowgirl find her murdered husband's soul in **Steven Nightingale**'s novel *The Thirteenth Daughter of the Moon*. He discusses his latest book (Ch[illegible] Theologies) at **Moe's Books** (2476 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley) on Thursday, May 28, 7:30 p.m. Free. MoesBooks.com — *A.R.*

Tom Standage

Tom Standage

What [illegible] is not just lunch. The types of foods that [illegible] civilizations cultivate, ending up shaping world history by creating new technologies, economies, empires, and reasons for war: journalist **Tom Standage** asserts in *An Edible History of Humanity*, which he discusses at **Mrs. Dalloway's** (2904 College Ave., Berkeley) on Sunday, May 31, 3 p.m., free. MrsDalloways.com — *A.R.*

$5 suggested. Oakland. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-8387. UUCB.org.

Susan Neckinakor Discussing *The Chemistry of Conversion*. Wed., May 27, 7 p.m. Free. Diesel, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965. Dieselbookstore.com.

Tom Standage Reading from *An Edible History of Humanity*. Sun., May 31, 3 p.m. Free. Mrs. Dalloway's Literary and Garden Arts, 2904 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-704-8222. MrsDalloways.com.

PUBLIC INTEREST

41st Annual Walk to End Poverty Walk around the lake and community fair to help raise awareness about poverty. First 450 registered walkers who bring a non-perishable food donation for the Alameda County Community Food Bank will receive a free t-shirt. Meet at the Lake Merritt Bandstand. For info visit OaklandCAP.org. Sat., May 30, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. Lake Merritt, 666 Bellevue Ave., Oakland. [illegible]-444-2489.

Berkeley Liberation Radio Oakland Meeting Thursdays, 7 p.m. Free. Long Haul, 3124 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-540-0751.

Democracy for America Meeting The Alameda chapter invites everyone to attend its monthly meeting for food, drink, and liberal and progressive politics. Novices at DFA meetup.com. First Wednesday of every month, 7 p.m. Pasta Pelone, 2413 Mariner Square Dr., Alameda. 510-864-7427. PastaPelone.com.

Rally For Works Security Fairness for Teachers Demanding repeal of the WEP and GPO legislation, which currently prevents teachers in CA and fourteen other states from receiving social security benefits. Sat., May 30, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Free. Berkeley Community Theater, 1930 Allston Way (at Milvia St.), Berkeley. 510-644-8583.

SPOKEN WORD

Duet Poetry Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., donations requested. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568. LaPena.org.

Hella Dust Thursdays, 4:30-10:30 p.m., donations requested. Eastside Cultural Center, 2277 International Blvd., Oakland. 510-533-6629.

Open Mic with Dead Man Thursdays, 7 p.m. St. Cristobal's Community Center & Coffeehouse, 1313 High St., Alameda. 510-864-8600. CrossroadCoffee.org.

Poetic Groove Fridays, 7:30 p.m. Free. Reruns [illegible] Eastmont Town Center (7200 Bancroft Ave., Ste. 230), Oakland. [illegible]-430-9931.

Poetry Diversified First and third Tuesday of every month, 7:30-9 p.m. Free. World Ground Cafe, 3727 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland. 510-487-2833. WorldGrounds.com.

Spoken Word Open Mic Sign-ups at 7 p.m. Second and Fourth Thursday of every month, 7:30 p.m. Free. Fruitvale Cafe, 6580 Shattuck Ave., Oakland. 510-985-5344. [illegible]cafe.net.

Thursday at Word Beat A weekly spoken-word and poetry gathering. Thursdays, 7 p.m. Free. AngelFire.com/poetry/wordbeat. Mediterraneum Cafe, 2475 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-549-1128.

Works in Progress Sign up between 7 and 7:20 p.m. for 5-8 minutes of performing time. First Tuesday of every month, 7:30-8:45 p.m. $5 donations includes light refreshments. 510-278-0379. American Women's Cultural Arts Club, 1000 American Blvd., Oakland. 510-339-1882.

More Listings Online

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BODY & SOUL

Strong and Gentle

Lenzie Williams brings together body, heart, mind and spirit at Tai Chi Berkeley

Lenzie Williams.

Warriorship can take many different forms. Lenzie Williams learned about one form during his four years in the US Navy and as a field medical corpsman in Vietnam. Then he learned about another form as an award-winning tai chi chuan practitioner. But then, two crucial lessons lay years apart.

After his release from the armed services, Berkeley native Williams began studying psychology and sociology at college, while attending "Gestalt and other personal development groups and workshops," he remembers. "Having discovered meditation and metaphysics, I became totally fascinated and deeply interested in this area. I then proceeded to seriously study different yogic, metaphysical, meditative, and spiritual development systems." This led him to tai chi chuan master Lo Pang Jeng, aka Ben Lo, with whom he began training.

Within a few months, Williams realized intuitively that this slow-paced, infinitely graceful form of martial arts "embodied the essence of all my various studies. It was a somewhat esoteric, or hidden path to the development of one's complete being. I discovered through this training system that one is taught the process of gaining deeper and deeper access to the essential experience and wisdom of the body, heart, mind, and spirit. I had to some degree accessed some of these qualities in my previous work, but now I was asked or challenged to access them in the martial/warriorship context." More importantly, he was learning how "to apply these principles and related experiences to my daily life."

He went on to enter and win tournaments around the world, including the Push Hands Grand Championship in 1988 and 1990. But just as important as winning, he avows, is "learning the multilevel lesson of losing and non-success." Still studying with Lo, Williams now operates **Tai Chi Berkeley**, a school that offers workshops as well as group and private classes. (All classes are held at Western Sky Studio, 2525 8th St., Berkeley.) Its twelve-week spring 2009 session — which includes beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels as well as sword classes — begins on Friday, May 29.

Williams, who specializes in the Cheng Man Ching style of tai chi chuan, lauds the rejuvenating, stress-reducing benefits of even ten-minute sessions, which can be practiced standing, sitting, or even in wheelchairs. "Slow conscious movement has a beneficial effect on the central nervous system, as it tends to balance the erratic impulse behavior of the nerves that results from environmental stress and shock. ... Correct posturing throughout the exercise is emphasized to develop and maintain correct vertebral alignment. Basically, tai chi can do much to facilitate and improve the functioning of all the vital systems: the skeletal, muscular, circulatory, lymph, excretory, digestive, endocrine, nervous, and sensory. This will provide better health, resistance to disease, and a better emotional and mental state." TaiChiBerkeley.com

— Anneli Rufus

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Soul of Caregiving: Writing and Guided Imagery for Insight and Wellness Workshop [illegible] creative techniques to reduce stress and improve [illegible] Sat., May 30, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m., free. Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Ave., Walnut Creek, 925-938-[illegible]

PERSONAL GROWTH

[illegible] Recovery A weekly meeting to discuss life-changing principles. Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. Creekside Community Church, 951 MacArthur Blvd., San Leandro. 510-430-0607. CreeksideCommunity.org.

[illegible] Dependency Workshops A weekly [illegible] for users, friends of users, parents of users, and children of users. [illegible] weekly Saturdays, 11 a.m.-noon, free. Alta Bates Summit Medical Center Health Education Center, 400 Hawthorne Ave., Oakland. 510-655-4000.

Drop-In Dream Group [illegible], Ph.D. facilitates this weekly discussion [illegible] for which no discussion is necessary. Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon, $10. Practical Dreamwork, 554 Grand Ave., Oakland. 510-444-[illegible]. Practicaldreamwork.com.

Food for Thought Readings by [illegible] Thursdays, 5-7 p.m. [illegible] Gallery, 1000 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-[illegible].

Mandana Community Recovery Center Friday Night Meditation Meditation weekly [illegible] and breath [illegible] exploration and different styles of meditation. Fridays, 6-9 p.m., free for Mandana CRC [illegible] $3 for nonmembers. Mandana Community Recovery Center, 3989 Howe St., Oakland. 510-595-0100.

Mandana Community Recovery Center Tuesday Education Presentation A different holistic or spiritual topic that can help with addiction recovery is [illegible] each week. Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Continues through Dec. 31, free for Mandana CRC [illegible], $3 for nonmembers. Mandana Community Recovery Center, 3989 Howe St., Oakland. 510-595-0100.

RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY

Core Curriculum Tuesday Nights Courses open to everyone, but highly recommended for people interested in leadership positions in the church. An optional potluck dinner at 6 p.m. will precede worship (7 p.m.) and programs (7:30 p.m.). Call for schedule. Tuesdays, 7 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-0302. UUCB.org.

The Heart of Islam: Essentials of Muslim Religion and Spirituality This informative course gives the essentials of Islamic beliefs and spiritual practices, from the reality of God to the history of prophets to Shariah and Islamic ethics. Thursdays, 7-8:45 p.m. Continues through May 28, $0 per class. Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California, 1433 Madison St., Oakland.

Interfaith Prayers for Peace With Wellness [illegible] Hatcroft. All are welcome. First Wednesday of every month, 7 p.m. [illegible] Center of Light Oakland, 2044 20th Ave., Oakland. 510-635-4268.

LGBT Meditation Group Vipassana meditation [illegible] Spirit of [illegible]. E-mail [illegible] for info. Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m. Continues through Dec. 31, free. East Bay Meditation Center, 2147 Broadway Ave., Oakland. 510-268-0696. EastBayMeditation.org.

Silent Meditation The Tibetan bell is rung at 12:20 p.m., calling for silence, and rung again at 12:40 p.m. to end it. Wednesdays, Thursdays, 12:15-12:45 p.m. Continues through Dec. 31. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-0302. UUCB.org.

Thursday Evening Core Meditation Programs Exploring Unitarian Universalist Theology: first Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Exploring Prayer and Spiritual Practices for Unitarian Universalists: second Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Exploring Unitarian Universalist Heritage and Tradition: third Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Exploring World Religions: fourth Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Exploring Theological Perspectives: fifth Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Thursdays. Continues through Dec. 31. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-0302. UUCB.org.

YOGA & BODYWORK

InterPlay as a Life Practice Cynthia Winton-Henry and other InterPlay leaders lead an ongoing class on moving, breathing, improvising, and playing. Fridays, 10-11:30 a.m., $10-$15. InterPlayce, 2273 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-465-2797. InterPlay.org.

Tai Chi, Meditation, and Qigong With Jeffrey Kessler. Thursdays, [illegible] p.m., $50-$70 per month. Chestnut Ridge, 2215 Prince St., Berkeley. 510-704-9027. [illegible].org.

PICKS

Buddha's Birthday Celebration

He was a prince, but the man known today as Gautama Buddha or Shakyamuni Buddha cast off his wealth and sought enlightenment through meditation. At the **Nyingma Institute** (1815 Highland Pl., Berkeley) on Saturday, May 30, a **celebration of Shakyamuni's birthday** begins with a prayer and includes the chanting of a special mantra in his honor. 7 p.m. Nyingmainstitute.org *— Anneli Rufus*

Mindful Drumming Workshop

Percussion is a path to spiritual knowledge and personal growth, according to Kokomon Clottey in his book *Mindful Drumming: Ancient Wisdom for Unleashing the Human Spirit and Building Community*. At the **Attitudinal Healing Connection** (3278 West St., Oakland) on Saturday, May 30, Clottey leads a workshop titled **Mindful Drumming: The Magic of Rhythm and Sound**. 4 p.m. AHC-Oakland.org *— A.R.*

Yoga Immersion Workshop

Combining *darshana* (the study and practice of core texts), *sadhana* (integration of body and breath), and *shaktipat* (the highly coveted transmission of energy), a three-day **yoga-immersion workshop at Rudramandir** (830 Bancroft Way, Berkeley) on Friday, May 29 through Sunday, May 31 interweaves philosophy, meditation, postures, and mantras. $395. Rudramandir.com *— A.R.*

Yoga Mini Retreat

She practices yoga through poses, meditation, and art: Anja Borgstrom, creator of the Yoga Shakti-Gestures of Awakening calendars and illustrator of *Yoga Poems: Lines to Unfold By*, leads a **Mini-Retreat for Moms** at **4th Street Yoga** (1809 4th St., #C, Berkeley) on Sunday, May 31, focusing on strength, rejuvenation, sharing, and balance. 1:30 p.m. $35-$40. 4thStreetYoga.com *— A.R.*

Kokomon Clottey

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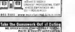
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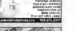
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AQUARIUM AGE

TIME TO ACT FOR POSITIVE CHANGE

For the week of May 27 June 2 2009

The planets are in transition this week, and so are we. Some of us are steeped in preliminary work, setting the stage for what lies ahead, but wishing for more time. Others of us are already hip-deep in organizational details, unable to postpone action despite all admonitions about Mercury Retrograde. Even more are feeling the consternation of patience, waiting like a horse in the gate to simply get started, but for one reason or another the "race" keeps getting postponed. Most transitions tend to be uncomfortable, and this one is no different. The best way through is to gather your strength as best you can, and also to know that by this time next week, you'll already be in overdrive.

Mercury goes Direct late in the day on May 30, so don't expect a strong forward push until Monday, June 1. While this retrograde hasn't lasted that much longer than other Mercury Retrograde phases (they usually last about three weeks), it does somehow seem longer. Maybe it's the lengthening days as we approach summer, or maybe life just feels stretched. Or perhaps this retrograde seems longer because during the entire retrograde Mercury has been so bloody busy — a situation that continues even as the retrograde ends. This week, Mercury squares the ongoing Jupiter/Neptune/Chiron conjunction, and while this conjunction is generally idealistic, the square from Mercury could have tongues wagging but words failing to convey any actual meaning. Mercury also continues to sextile Uranus, a positive interaction with the potential to keep minds actively engaged in creative innovation, a condition that could prevent the Jupiter/Neptune/Mercury proclivity toward gossip.

It's only the presence of Mercury that turns the Jupiter/Neptune/Chiron conjunction toward chitchat. On its own, this conjunction is all about an expansive idealism aimed at generous, humanitarian endeavors. It's basically just what's needed, given our current global circumstances, because this is the type of astral configuration that supports positive efforts to make the world a better place to live. Chiron's participation can skew the interpretation of this conjunction along several storylines. First, Chiron indicates the need to acknowledge and address the wounds of our collective greed. Next, Chiron signals the need to shift out of the idea that we are driven by animal appetites, which is the justification for the idea of the survival of the fittest. Third, Chiron also indicates that it's time to release personal and collective identification with our wounding and move into an identification with our healing — and I don't mean the Rapture. I'm talking about taking the very real knowledge we have about what we need to do to make the world a better place for all of its inhabitants and put it into motion. Chiron's presence is about actualizing our ideals through action. The time for talking about change is done.

As the week unfolds, Mars moves into a trine with Pluto, a configuration that translates into extraordinary amounts of energy and another reason the astral transits of the week are uncomfortable. While it won't be easy waiting until the retrograde is over, be patient, and by Monday the shift will feel solid and smooth.

If you know your Ascendant and/or your Moon Sign, read that, too.

ARIES The good news is there is too much to do. The best news is you can handle it. So rather than complain about the increased workload, welcome it. Embrace this phase and you'll enhance your success.

TAURUS Hiding in the shadows isn't an option, so rather than waste your time and energy attempting the impossible, allow yourself to shine. Yes, you'll receive a lot of attention, but you deserve the recognition.

GEMINI It's still important to pay attention to the details. And it is also important to rest. Make time to recuperate and you'll replenish important and necessary reserves.

CANCER Positive interactions with significant others, personal as well as professional, facilitate a shift not only in attitude but also in results. Do your best to unite your team and you'll be pleased with the results.

LEO Be prepared to experience renewed enthusiasm about your career, and also expect to feel reinvigorated about your prospects for success. It will take a lot of hard work, but you are definitely motivated to succeed.

VIRGO Continue to concentrate your efforts on the tasks at hand, and despite what could be called "recent setbacks," you will make steady progress. Believe in your capacity and capability and others will as well.

LIBRA Strengthen your internal center and you'll have a much easier time establishing and maintaining your equilibrium. This is not about a rigid stance; it's about taking the time to be with your thoughts and desires.

SCORPIO Meaningful conversations with friends and partners, personal or professional, will help you to clarify what you want, as well as what you need. Listen with an open heart and speak with the same integrity.

SAGITTARIUS Focus your efforts on work, and the financial gains will follow. While I can't promise a miracle, there are opportunities to find real and much need solutions.

CAPRICORN You're riding a strong creative current that feels powerful and comfortable, all at the same time. Enjoy this strength and put it to good use finding positive solutions to several problematic situations.

AQUARIUS Spend your intensity creatively and you'll feel revitalized and renewed. Not every project will be a "hit," but you won't care because the process will be completely satisfying.

PISCES Conversations with friends have the power to inspire a new approach to issues of self-esteem. If you're willing to be honest with yourself, you'll receive the necessary feedback to make lasting changes. ●

For More Info

Rafiee Finn specializes in Transformational Astrology. For readings, call 1-888-937-9264, write P.O. Box 343, New York, NY 10025, visit AquariumAge.com, or e-mail Rafiee@AquariumAge.com. Copyright © 2009 by Rafiee Finn.

A TASTE OF SPAIN IN TEMESCAL

Daniel Olivella keeps things traditional and casual at Barlata

By Matthew Stafford

Barlata looks and feels like a cool Barcelona hangout where students with knapsacks and old men in berets drop by for a glass of wine or a saucer of almonds and pass the evening in a nimbus of good talk, communal noshing, and cerveza. Tall arching windows let in plenty of sunshine. Rusted-steel light fixtures, blood-red walls, a planked wood ceiling, and vivid artwork of Iberian sardine cans summon the spirit of Gaudí. There's a long twenty-seat table down the middle of the dining room where friends and strangers alike can get to know one another better over platters of *pulpo* and paella, and the seven-seat marble-topped wine bar is a fun place to compare and contrast the fermented grape juice of Galicia, Navarra, and Castilla.

Chef-owner Daniel Olivella, a native-born Catalan from a village just outside Barcelona, knows how to bring a bit of the homeland to the Bay Area. After stints at the Zuni Cafe, Thirsty Bear, and the late and sorely missed Maltese Grill in the city, he opened the hip yet upscale B44 in 1999, introducing the Belden Alley crowd to the pleasures of *mel i mató*. Barlata, his latest venture (it opened in March), is a more casual sort of place. No reservations are accepted, the layout encourages friendly interaction, and the menu lets the passerby sup on anything from a glass of manzanilla to a multicourse meal. Olivella has also resisted the temptation to tart up his 35-item tapas menu with seared tuna and other Californian whimsicalities, focusing instead on such tried and true specialties as octopus and anchovies, salt cod and romesco, sardines and omelets, albóndigas and allioli.

Barlata
4901 Telegraph Ave., Oakland
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Hours: Daily 5-11 p.m.
No reservations.

Sample Menu

3 Gazpachos	$5
Lata de Pulpo	$10
Tortilla con Chorizo	$8
Braised Oxtail	$8
Seafood Paella ...	$13/$20
Bocadillo de Chocolate	$4.50

We began our meal with three varieties of Andalusian cold soup, attractively presented in fluted glasses for easy sipping: *ajoblanco*, a creamy, mildly tangy concoction of garlic, almonds, and thick golden olive oil; *salmorejo*, a rich and smoky tomato bisque draped with Serrano ham; and an especially vernal gazpacho bursting with the flavors of cucumber, parsley, and sweet pepper. *Xató*, a traditional Catalan dressing of ground nuts, garlic, olive oil, and vinegar, was served on a tangle of spiky *frisée* with bits of bonito tuna and dollops of puréed salt cod, a bright and surprisingly copacetic dish. Less enticing was the *pulpo* (octopus), a rubbery, paprika-draped mollusc despite its two-hour cooking time and whimsical presentation in a shiny new sardine can.

One of the restaurant's best tapas was the *tortilla con chorizo*, a hearty potato-sausage omelet far tastier than the usual reheated frittata. Another classic Spanish dish, *brandade*, skillfully tempered salt cod's often fishy, ponderous nature with just fluffy enough mashed potatoes, roasted garlic, and walnut oil. The lamb meatballs with squid and chocolate sauce didn't quite come together — the sauce had a nice smoky earthiness to it, but what's with the squid? — and the blood sausage, while crisp, spicy, and snappy as all get-out, was on the overcooked side. But the dozen tiny clams sprinkled with chopped chorizo and creamy white beans was a sweet, briny treat, and the oxtail, braised for five hours until tender and succulent and served with creamy puréed potatoes, was comfort food in any language.

The 3 Gazpachos are attractively presented

Chris Duffey

When it came to the few non-tapas selections, I once again opted for paella and was once again disappointed. Although I like the idea of paella, I've seldom had one that tasted as *good* as it sounded, and Barlata's rendition is no exception. It looked *great*, brought to the table in a rustic paella pan crowned with *jumbo* prawns, and the whole steamy, succulent saffron-infused concept is tantalizing. But in the end it was the same old mishmash of nondescript rice, rubbery textures, and muddled flavors.

The desserts were the best things on Barlata's menu. The *crema de carquiñol* looked like a thick mug of frothy cappuccino but was actually a rich, creamy espresso-flavored mousse topped with brandy-infused foam and a crunchy little churro dipped in white chocolate. The *plato de dulces* was a treasure trove of chocolate-covered orange peel, chewy almond cookies, dark, bittersweet chocolate bark studded with peanuts, and luscious brandied figs dipped in truffle-worthy chocolate. Best of all was the *bocadito*: brioche sandwiches warm from the grill filled with fudgy melting chocolate and served with a luscious *crema catalana* dipping sauce.

Considering the Spanish proclivity for seafood and *jamón*, there are a surprising number of vegetarian-friendly items on Barlata's menu. One of those shiny sardine cans (a specialty of the house, evidently) is filled with mixed mushrooms and parsley *picada*. Among the cold tapas are roasted vegetables with pine nuts, grilled Catalan bread with tomato, and two salads. Hot stuff includes a potato-onion tortilla without the sausage, vegetable-asparagus pasta with manchego, and fried potatoes with allioli. In addition, there's paella in two ways: made with assorted vegetables and a vegan vegetable broth.

The reasonably priced 44-item wine list offers an extensive selection of vintages from just about every Spanish wine region: *viuras* and *verdejos* and *tempranillos* and *tinta finos* from Penedès, La Rioja, Almansa, and points between. (Senorio Crianza's earthy Ribera del Duero *cuvée del país* was especially yummy with the oxtail.) Sixteen are available by the glass. Eleven dessert wines and five varieties of sherry are offered as well (a glass of amontillado is practically compulsory with a saucer of cured olives and country bread) and soft drinks include the milky-white tiger nut-infused *horchata* from Valencia. Equally impressive is the beer list, which features Mexico's bitter, bracing Chupacabras and Canada's positively creamy Maudite red ale among a half-dozen other tasty rarities.

Top-shelf Spanish foodstuffs — canned octopus, anchovies, and sardines as well as fig spread, *allioli*, olive oil, and *tempranillo* vinegar — are also available for purchase. Service is friendly, knowledgeable, and pleasantly opinionated, especially on the subject of wine and what to eat with it. All in all this is a lively and welcoming venue to enjoy a bit of Barcelona without leaving Temescal. ●

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RICHMOND & NORTH

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Skinner 3885 San Pablo Dam Rd., El Sobrante, 510-223-8119 (Contemporary American) $
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Fatapple's 7525 Fairmount Ave., El Cerrito, 510-526-3433 (Bakery/Breakfast/Brunch/Diner) $-$$
The Hot Shop 939 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-528-901[illegible] (Mexican) $
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RECENTLY REVIEWED

E-Z Stop Deli

5233 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-9344. The size of the sandwiches and the friendliness of the staff evoke times of yore that gentle generosity of delis in the era before Subway, when confident countermen asked gently, "All the trimmings, miss?" and sliced onions with bravura and seemed to care. The fourteen-ounce avocado-and-cheese sandwich is a can't-fit-your-mouth-around-it block, comprising an entire avocado, several thick slices of cheese, and fistfuls of raw produce. A seventeen-ounce egg-salad sandwich, black-pepper'd its spilling its silky smoothness, soars four inches tall. These are master-class sandwiches: plainly exquisite, exquisitely plain. $

Grub N Go

2109 Allston Way, Berkeley, 510-540-4882. Popular with students, Grub N Go serves regular sandwiches along with baked potatoes and hot sandwiches. The latter, such as the lofty smoky reds, thirteen-ounce "Mushroom Mozzarella" and colossal eighteen-ounce "Vegetarian" — bursting with roasted eggplant, roasted mushrooms, roasted peppers, cheese, handfuls of spinach, and three different mustards — qualify as three-course meals. Outdoor umbrella tables make for a nice break on a sunny day. $

Picán

2295 Broadway, Oakland, 510-834-1000. This striking yet sultry new Uptown destination serves classic Southern cooking with an upscale California slant: lush, silky she-crab soup; fried chicken drizzled with truffle-infused organic honey; mouthmeltingly tender barbecued ribs with peanut jalapeño coleslaw; a towering root beer float with sassafras ice cream. The handsome setting is all high ceilings, earth tones, and Old South elegance, and the friendly bar pours the Bay Area's finest selection of single-barrel bourbons. $$$$

Raw Energy

2050 Addison St., Berkeley, 510-665-9464. Because Raw Energy has no inside seating and just one tiny outdoor table, it is virtually a takeout-only operation. Nalani makes the crust for his raw "pizza" by sprouting wheat berries for three days, then dehydrating them for another eighteen hours. He tops the crust with layers of avocado, alfalfa sprouts, julienned red cabbage, carrot ribbons, tahini, and vegan Parmesan "cheese." Sensibly, it releases an explosion of textures as the flavors register. Raw tomato soup is thicker, spicier and slightly warmer than tomato juice; nut milks — made with powdered walnuts and flavored with your choice of vanilla, carob, or fruit — teeter on the verge of entrées (because they're high-protein) and desserts (because they're rich and sweet). Think a raw meal won't fill you up? It will. $

Beta Lounge

2124 Center St., Berkeley, 510-845-5400. This sleek little wine bar boasts an ambient conviviality that belies its proto-IKEA design scheme. The brief and inexpensive wine list is supplemented with beer and an interesting menu of sake cocktails, as well as a dozen or so largely satisfying noshes: filled-to-bursting spring rolls with coconut-peanut dipping sauce; a platter of artisan cheeses with fresh fruit and baguette; sandwiches of roasted turkey and ripe avocado on warm focaccia; hefty slabs of ciabatta pizza topped with mozzarella, roasted peppers, and eggplant. Ciao Bella gelato in three varieties is available for dessert. $$

Smokey Blues Bar-Be-Que

3415 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-350-8000. Big meaty ribs with plenty of slow-cooked smoky flavor are served at this friendly rough-around-the-edges barbecue joint. But there's more to the place than that: plump, juicy sausage links in crackly casings; tender, spicy black-eyed peas; bright, earthy collard greens; the best red beans and rice this side of Canal Street; warm, sweet muffins ribboned with cornmeal. Minimal wine and beer list. $$

San Francisco Soup Company

2512 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 510-848-7687; 1500 Clay St., Oakland, 510-763-7687. The San Francisco Soup Company is many things it isn't supposed to be. Soup — [illegible]. And soup is fast food. But it works. The East Bay restaurants in this rapidly increasing chain serve delicious soups from an ever-shifting menu of more than eighty varieties, including many organic, low-carb, and gluten-free versions, and many incorporating all-organic ingredients. San Francisco Soup Company's salads and wraps are not to be overlooked either. The wraps especially are almost big enough to comprise two meals each. $

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Renee's Place 1477 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-525-7397. (Chinese) $$

Zachary's Chicago Pizza 1853 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-525-5950. (Pizza) $-$$

BERKELEY NORTH

César 1515 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-883-0222. (Spanish/Tapas/Small Plates) $$

[illegible] 1686 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-981-1213. (Japanese/Sushi/Vegetarian/Vegan) $$

The Cheese Board Pizza Collective 1512 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-549-3055. (Organic/Sustainable/Pizza) $

Cioccolata Di Vino [illegible] Shattuck Ave. Suite C, Berkeley, 510-809-1282. (Dessert/Ice Cream/Bakery/Wine Bar) $$

[illegible] 1788 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]. (Italian) $$$

[illegible] 1574 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-849-1083. (Chinese/Dessert/Ice Cream) $

Fatapple's 1346 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley, 510-526-2260. (Bakery/Breakfast/Brunch/Diner) $-$$

Guerilla Cafe 1620 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-2233. (Breakfast/Brunch/Organic/Sustainable) $

[illegible] Taqueria 1314 B Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-4811. (Mexican) $

Saul's Restaurant and Delicatessen 1475 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-848-3354. (Deli/Kosher/Kids/Organic/Sustainable) $$

top dog 2503 Hearst Ave., Berkeley, 510-843-1241. (American/Burgers/Sandwiches/Organic/Sustainable) $

BERKELEY DOWNTOWN

Alborz Persian Cuisine 2142 Center St., Berkeley, 510-848-8477. (Middle Eastern/Persian) $$

Amanda's 2122 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-2122. (American/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Andy and Cindy's Thai Cuisine Berkeley Saturday Farmers' Market (Center St. at Martin Luther King Jr. Way), Berkeley, 510-830-9796. (Organic/Sustainable/Thai/Buddhist Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Arinell 2119 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-4035. (Pizza) $

Bangkok Thai Cuisine 1459 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-848-6483. (Thai/Vietnamese) $

Beckett's 2271 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-647-1790. (American/English/Irish) $$

Brazil Fresh Squeeze Cafe 2161 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-8011. (Brazilian/Deli/South American) $

Chaat Cafe 1902 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-1431. (Indian/Pakistani/Tapas/Small Plates) $

Jayakarta [illegible] University Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]. (Southeast Asian) $-$$

[illegible] Smokehouse [illegible] Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 510-849-0888. (Barbecue) $-$$

[illegible] Thai Dining 1823 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1888. (Thai/Burmese) $-$$

Pie in the Sky 2124 Center St., Berkeley, 510-848-8878. (Pizza) $

[illegible] 1923 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-2148. (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $$

top dog 2160 Center St., Berkeley, 510-849-0176. (American/Burgers/Sandwiches/Organic/Sustainable) $

Tropical Paradise [illegible] University Ave., Berkeley, 510-665-4080. (African) $$

Tuk Tuk Thai Cafe 2480-2486 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-8300. (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $-$$

[illegible] 2377 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-9850. (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$$

BERKELEY-WEST & EMERYVILLE

900 Grayson 900 Grayson St., Berkeley, 510-704-9900. (California Cuisine) $$

[illegible] [illegible] Dwight Way, Berkeley, 510-848-4315. (Thai/Burmese) $$

The Bread Workshop 1398 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-[illegible]. (Bakery/California [illegible]) $

Bucci's 6121 Hollis St., Emeryville, 510-547-4725. (California Cuisine/Italian/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

Cafe Cacao 740 Heinz Ave. (at Seventh St.), Berkeley, 510-843-6000. (Bakery/California Cuisine/Dessert/Ice Cream/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$$

Cafe Clem 2703 Seventh St. #100, Berkeley, 510-204-9007. (French) $

Cafe M [illegible] Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-528-4428. (Bakery/Breakfast/Brunch) $$

Cafe Rouge 1782 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-525-1440. (California Cuisine/French/Organic/Sustainable) $$-$$$

Doyle Street Cafe 5515 Doyle St., Emeryville, 510-547-1533. (Breakfast/Brunch/Diner) $

Everett & Jones Barbeque 1955 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, (510) 548-8261. (Barbecue) $$

[illegible] 1920 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-549-5098. (Indian/Pakistani/[illegible]) $

Jamaican [illegible] [illegible] San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-704-4081. (Caribbean) $

Lanesplitter Pizza and Pub 2033 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-1652. (Pizza) $

[illegible] [illegible] 40th St., Emeryville, 510-985-8388. (Vegetarian/Vegan) $

[illegible] [illegible] 40th St., Emeryville, 510-[illegible]. (Japanese/Sushi) $$

[illegible] 2072 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]. (Indian) $-$$

Sea Salt 2512 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-883-1720. (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable/Seafood) $$-$$$

BERKELEY-SOUTH

Adagia 2700 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 510-647-2300. (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

Breads of India 2448 Sacramento St., Berkeley, 510-848-7684. (Indian/Pakistani/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

[illegible] 2575 Durant Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]. (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Cafe Valparaiso 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-3899. (South American) $$

[illegible] 2875 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-704-1317. (Mexican) $

Crixa Cakes 2748 Adeline St., Berkeley, 510-548-0421. (Bakery/Cafe/Coffeehouse) $-$$

Shen Hua 2914 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-883-3888. (Chinese) $-$$

Sweet Adeline Bakeshop 3350 Adeline St., Berkeley, 510-595-7381. (Bakery/Cafe/Coffeehouse) $-$$

top dog 2534 Durant Ave., Berkeley, 510-843-5967. (American/Burgers/Sandwiches/Organic/Sustainable) $

OAKLAND-ROCKRIDGE

Garibaldi's 5356 College Ave., Oakland, 510-595-4000. (California Cuisine/Tapas/Small Plates) $$$

Khana Peena 5316 College Ave., Oakland, 510-658-2300. (Indian/Pakistani) $$

Marica 5301 College Ave., Oakland, 510-985-8388. (Asian Fusion/Seafood) $-$$$

[illegible] [illegible] College Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]. (Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

[illegible] [illegible] Claremont Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]. (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine) $-$$

[illegible] Bar-Be-Que 3415 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-350-2101. (American/Barbecue/Cajun/Creole/Southern/Soul Food) $$

Soi4 Bangkok Eatery 5421 College Ave., Oakland, 510-655-0889. (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $$

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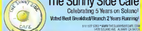
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The Blenders

You may think that red plus white equals pink, but that equation infuriates many Old World purists.

In my freshman year in college, I lived on a hallway with a group of women my roommate and I called "The Blenders." The nickname was born of the fact that after victories big and small, these gals liked to celebrate by making blended drinks. "Weee're bleeendingggg!!!!!" went the siren call signifying that the celebratory ritual was about to begin. Sure, we felt superior, as we had in our turn, room reading Beat poetry. But there was certainly no shortage of things to mock about me and my cadre of nonblenders — choking our way through clove cigarettes and our belief that Malibu rum straight from the bottle was somehow more sophisticated than an 80-proof piña colada come to mind.

I was reminded of my juvenile disdain for the blenders in recent weeks, when the European Union submitted a proposal allowing wine producers to blend red and white wines together (a process that's currently banned in Europe, with a few exceptions) and call the resulting wine rosé. The wine now bearing the name rosé in Europe is usually made through a maceration process involving curtailed contact between the crushed skins of red grapes and their juice — limiting the depth of color achieved and the alcohol content. As word of the new labeling proposal spread, you could almost hear the Brits raise their Spice-Girlishly innocent cry of "Wine're bleeeendingggg!!!!!" France's grumbling response was far more audible, and an EU vote on the measure in June will reveal whether the French government's efforts to block the proposal have been successful. *It's all just so ... American*, they're probably be thinking — because here the blending of reds and whites to make what we call rosé is commonplace. But let's admit it. The East Bay is not America, and winemakers here tend to fall in line with the French far more than they do with mass-market practices.

Take Berkeley's A Donkey and Goat Winery and its **2008 Isabel's Cuvée Grenache Rosé ($16)**, which is made through a labor-intensive maceration process from Grenache Gris grapes grown in Mendocino County's McDowell Valley. This crisp, dry, salmon-colored wine has a strong strawberry bouquet, with more berry on the palate along with some citrus and melon. As with last year's vintage, Token Winemaker noted something "animal" in the aroma, along with a little prickly yeast. He complained about the heat, and at 14 percent alcohol the Isabel's Cuvée is a bit more alcoholic than most rosés. But to me that just established it more firmly as a cocktail wine. Definitely celebration worthy, and nary a blender in sight.

If you're aiming for a lower price point, try **Abel Clement's Côtes du Rhône Rosé ($8.99)** — a dry pink that's earning as many raves as the impressive red-and-white blends made by a French cooperative whose wines have never failed us.

Shola Campbell

For retail availability, visit EastBayExpress.com

R&C

Barbeque 5812 College Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (American/Breakfast/Brunch/California Cuisine) $$

Top Dog 5100 Telegraph (inside Longs Drugs), Oakland, 510-[illegible] (American/Burgers/Sandwiches/Organic/Sustainable) $

Zachary's Oakland Pizza 5801 College Ave., Oakland, 510-655-5555 (Pizza) $-$$

OAKLAND-TEMESCAL

[illegible] Restaurant 6120 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-653-3456 (African/Ethiopian/Eritrean) $$

Aunt Mary's Cafe 4307 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-601-9227 (American/Breakfast, Brunch, Southern/Soul Food) $-$$

[illegible] 5098 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Bakery/Cafe/Coffeehouse) $-$$

Cafe [illegible] 6427 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (African/Ethiopian/[illegible]/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

[illegible] 4301 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-601-[illegible] ([illegible]) $

[illegible] 2115 Oakland Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Korean) $$

[illegible] Delicatessen and [illegible] 5007 Telegraph Ave., Building A, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Deli/Italian) $

[illegible] Sushi 4290 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Japanese/Sushi) $$

La [illegible] 5139 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-601-[illegible] (Mexican) $

[illegible] Pizza [illegible] 4799 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Pizza) $

[illegible] Restaurant 3915 Broadway, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Korean) $-$$

[illegible] 5000 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable/Pizza) $$-$$$

[illegible] 4319 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] ([illegible]) $-$$

Oakland [illegible] 3801 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Korean) $-$$

[illegible] 4905 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (African/Moroccan/Spanish) $$

[illegible] 4309 Telegraph Ave., Suite B, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Chinese/Korean) $

[illegible] 3919 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Chinese/Korean) $

OAKLAND PIEDMONT, GRAND LAKE & EAST

Blackberry [illegible] 4240 Park Blvd., Oakland, 510-336-1088 (Breakfast/Brunch/Southern/Soul Food) $-$$

[illegible] 3811 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-547-5035 (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

[illegible] 4125 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (French) $$

[illegible] Sushi 532 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Japanese/Sushi) $$

[illegible] 3316 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (California Cuisine) $$$-$$$$

[illegible] 3314 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Japanese/Sushi) $$

[illegible] 4650 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (French) $-$$

[illegible] Submarine Sandwiches 7086 Antioch Ct., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (American) $

[illegible] Ethiopian Restaurant 4381 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (African/Ethiopian/Eritrean) $

Z Cafe [illegible] 2735 Broadway, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (American/Breakfast/California Cuisine) $$

OAKLAND-DOWNTOWN & JACK LONDON SQ.

[illegible] Oakland 499 9th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$

[illegible] 578 14th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Organic/Sustainable/Southeast Asian/Thai/Vietnamese) $

[illegible] 510 Broadway, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Cambodian/Laotian/Seafood/Southeast Asian/Thai/Vegetarian/Vegan) $-$$

[illegible] 336 10th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $-$$

[illegible] 848 Clay St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani) $-$$

[illegible] 2534 Mandela Parkway, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southern/Soul Food) $$

Cafe [illegible] 511 Washington St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Cafe/Coffeehouse/California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

[illegible] 921 Webster St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $

[illegible] Cafe 113 Washington St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (American/Breakfast/Brunch/Cafe/Coffeehouse/California Cuisine/Nuevo Latino/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

[illegible] Restaurant 701 Webster St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Chinese/Seafood) $-$$

House of [illegible] 444 Embarcadero, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (American/Southern/Soul Food) $

[illegible] 412 15th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Japanese/Sushi) $-$$$

[illegible] Lounge 2221 Broadway, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Belgian/California Cuisine/French) $$-$$$

[illegible] 1155 3rd St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southern/Soul Food) $$

[illegible] 300 Broadway, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (California Cuisine) $$$

[illegible] 388 12th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $$

[illegible] 468 8th St., Oakland, 510-444-[illegible] (Mexican/Tapas/Small Plates) $-$$

Top Dog 493 14th St., Suite 87, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (American/Burgers/Sandwiches/Organic/Sustainable) $

[illegible] Bar-B-Que [illegible] 614 14th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Barbecue) $-$$

ALAMEDA

[illegible] 1313 Park St., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Tapas/Small Plates) $

[illegible] 1440 Park St., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Seafood) $$

[illegible] Sushi 2315-A Central Ave., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (American/Breakfast/[illegible]) $-$$

The New Zealander 1408 Webster St., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Seafood/English/Irish/New Zealander/Organic/Sustainable) $

[illegible] 1507 Park St., Alameda, 510-522-[illegible] (American/Breakfast/[illegible]) $

[illegible] Restaurant 1615 Webster St., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $

[illegible] 2321 Central Ave., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (California Cuisine) $-$$

[illegible] Sushi 1428 Park St., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Japanese/Sushi) $$

OAKLAND-EAST

[illegible] 1500 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $

[illegible] Restaurant 702 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-444-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $

[illegible] Restaurant 3731 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $

[illegible] 2400 [illegible] Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Cambodian/Laotian/Southeast Asian/Thai/Vietnamese) $

[illegible] 1449 Fruitvale Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Central American/Salvadoran) $

La [illegible] 3605 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $

[illegible] Barbeque 2676 [illegible] Ave., Oakland, (510) [illegible] (Barbecue) $$

[illegible] Cafe 1226 7th Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $

[illegible] 2230 Livingston St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Breakfast/Brunch) $

[illegible] House 3012 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Cambodian/Laotian/Southeast Asian) $

Pho [illegible] 221 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $-$$

[illegible] 3829 Foothill Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Barbecue/[illegible]) $

HAYWARD & SAN LEANDRO

[illegible] 947 A St., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Italian) $$

[illegible] 1239 MacArthur Blvd., San Leandro, 510-[illegible] (Asian Fusion/Tapas/Small Plates) $-$$

[illegible] 28057 Mission Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani) $

[illegible] Barbeque [illegible] A Street, Hayward, (510) [illegible] (Barbecue) $$

[illegible] Bar-B-Q Restaurant 22365 Mission Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Barbecue/Korean) $$

The [illegible] 22017 [illegible] Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (American/Seafood/Steak House) $-$$

[illegible] BBQ Restaurant 20010 [illegible] Rd., Castro Valley, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $

L&L [illegible] Barbecue 27208 [illegible] Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Barbecue/Hawaiian) $

La [illegible] 984 [illegible] St., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $$

La [illegible] 2699 [illegible] St., San Leandro, 510-[illegible] ([illegible]) $$

The [illegible] 725 B St., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (American/Diner) $

[illegible] Restaurant 1312 [illegible] St., San Leandro, 510-[illegible] ([illegible]) $-$$$

Thai [illegible] 1370 E. 14th St., San Leandro, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Thai/[illegible]) $-$$

[illegible] Restaurant 244 [illegible] St., San Leandro, 510-[illegible] (Vietnamese) $$

[illegible] 22532 Foothill Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Chinese/Korean) $

FREMONT, NEWARK & UNION CITY

[illegible] Cafe 1054 Mowry Ave., Fremont, 510-796-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani/Tapas/Small Plates) $-$$

[illegible] 1743 [illegible] Rd., Union City, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $

[illegible] 3-[illegible] Alvarado-Niles Rd., Union City, 510-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani) $-$$

[illegible] Afghan [illegible] House 37035 Fremont Blvd., Fremont, 510-[illegible] (Afghan/Middle Eastern) $-$$

[illegible] Restaurant 3050 Washington Blvd., Fremont, 510-[illegible] (Afghan/Halal/Middle Eastern) $-$$

[illegible] 42761 [illegible] Rd., Fremont, 510-[illegible] (Barbecue/Deli) $

L&L Hawaiian [illegible] 1894 [illegible] Rd. (in the Union City Marketplace), Union City, (510) [illegible] (Barbecue/Hawaiian) $

[illegible] 113 [illegible] Rd., Union City, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $

[illegible] 40000 Fremont Blvd., Fremont, 510-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani/Pizza) $

[illegible] Restaurant [illegible] Mowry Ave., Newark, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $-$$

[illegible] 31482 [illegible] Blvd., Fremont, 510-[illegible] (Afghan/Kosher/Halal/Middle Eastern) $$

PLEASANT HILL, CONCORD & EAST

[illegible] [illegible] Sutter St., Concord, 925-[illegible] (Eastern European/German/Austrian) $$

[illegible] Brewing Company and Barbeque 2151 Salvio St., Suite L, Concord, 925-[illegible] (American/Brewpub) $-$$

[illegible] 2703 [illegible] Ave., [illegible], 925-[illegible] ([illegible]) $$

[illegible] Pizza & More [illegible] Colfax St., Concord, 925-[illegible] (Italian/Pizza) $

[illegible] Custom Meats 2227 [illegible] Ave., [illegible], 925-[illegible] (Barbecue/Deli) $

[illegible] Custom Meats 3820 [illegible] Industrial Way, Concord, 925-[illegible] (Barbecue/Deli) $

[illegible] Custom Meats 5811 Lone Tree Way, [illegible], Brentwood, 925-[illegible] (Barbecue/Deli) $

L&L Hawaiian [illegible] [illegible] Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill, (925) [illegible] (Seafood/Hawaiian) $

L&L Hawaiian Barbeque 5631 Lone Tree Way, $120, Brentwood, 925-[illegible] (Barbecue/Hawaiian) $

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La Piñata 2301 Willow Pass Rd., Concord, 925-609-3318 (Mexican) $$

Lucy's Asian Bistro 2580-A Sand Creek Rd. (in the Sand Creek Crossing mall), Brentwood, 925-513-1470 (Asian Fusion/Chinese/Japanese) $$-$$$

[illegible] Eatery & Wine Bar 1902 Oak Park Blvd., Pleasant Hill, 925-944-0402 (Tapas/Small Plates/Wine Bar) $$-$$$

Los Rancheros Restaurant 7100 [illegible] Dr., Concord, 925-685-7181 (Mexican) $

Taqueria Los Toros 2369 Monument Blvd., Suite D, Concord, 925-680-7126 (Mexican) $

WALNUT CREEK

[illegible] 1369 N. Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-407-3000 (French/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

[illegible] India 1358 N. Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-256-7664 (Indian/Pakistani/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

Mongolia 2000 1556 Botelho Dr., Walnut Creek, 925-979-1688 (Chinese) $-$$

[illegible] Hamburger 1491 Newell Ave., Walnut Creek, 925-939-4884 (Diner) $

Pho 1547 Palos Verdes Mall, Walnut Creek, 925-952-9899 (Vietnamese) $$

[illegible] Farmers Meats 1891 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Walnut Creek, 925-952-9303 (Barbecue/Deli) $

[illegible] Pizza 1238 Arroyo Way, Walnut Creek, 925-938-3478 (Italian/Italian) $

[illegible] Bowl 1518 N. Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-287-8888 (Chinese) $$

The Original Hickory Pit 1495-S. Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-935-2450 (Breakfast/Barbecue/Diner) $$

[illegible] 2930 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Walnut Creek, 925-947-0300 (Italian/Pizza) $-$$

LAMORINDA

Market [illegible] 2 Theater Sq., Suite 175, Orinda, 925-254-8380 (Greek/Turkish/Middle Eastern) $

[illegible] 3422 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-283-7200 (Barbecue/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

[illegible] Restaurant 1 Moraga Way, Suite 1, Moraga, 925-253-8352 (Chinese) $

[illegible] 1555 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-284-7380 (Chinese) $$-$$$

[illegible] Lafayette 3524 Mount Diablo Blvd. (in the Plaza Shopping Center), Lafayette, 925-284-4422 (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine) $$$

Pizza [illegible] 3600 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-283-0500 (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable/Pizza) $$-$$$

[illegible] Ristorante 300 Park St. (in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center), Moraga, 925-377-7600 (Italian/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

Vino 3531 Plaza Way, Lafayette, 925-284-3330 (Italian/Spanish/Tapas/Small Plates) $$

TRI-VALLEY

[illegible] Club 815 Main St., Pleasanton, 925-417-1224 (Tapas) $$$

[illegible] & Brew 11032 Main St., Sunol, 925-862-0971 (American/Steak House) $$-$$$

Bridges Restaurant and Bar 44 Church St., Danville, 925-820-7200 (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine) $$$-$$$$

Los Caporales 7130 Fleet St., Livermore, 925-449-4454 (Mexican) $

[illegible] and Dominique's Meats 736 Bud Ave., Pleasanton, 925-487-5590 (French) $$$-$$$$

[illegible] Bar 750 Camino Ramon, Danville, 925-314-0974 (California Cuisine) $$$

[illegible] Hill Restaurant 210 Sycamore Valley Rd. West (in the Danville Livery), Danville, 925-552-0505 (Steak House) $$$$

Kap's Original 532 W. Neal St., Pleasanton, 925-846-0290 (American/Steak House) $$$

[illegible] Farmers Meats 4825 Hopyard Rd., Suite F2, Pleasanton, 925-401-3000 (Barbecue/Deli) $

[illegible] Meats 800 [illegible] Dr., San Ramon, 925-552-0306 (Barbecue/Deli) $

[illegible] Meats 305-B Alamo Plaza, Alamo, 925-838-6530 (Barbecue/Deli) $

[illegible] David's 410 Sycamore Valley Rd. W., Danville, 925-838-7813 (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine) $$$

The [illegible] 257 Hartz Ave. (in the Danville Clock Tower Center), Danville, 925-820-6611 (California Cuisine) $$-$$$

Red [illegible] Grill 4501 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton, 925-734-8307 (American/Barbecue) $

Red Tractor Cafe 4920 Dublin Blvd., Dublin, 925-829-8300 (American) $

[illegible] 21314 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon, 925-829-5518 (Middle Eastern/Persian) $$

Uncle Yu's at the Vineyard 39 S. Livermore Ave., Livermore, 925-449-7000 (Chinese) $$-$$$

[illegible] Bistro 115 [illegible] Plaza, Alamo, 925-855-0850 (California Cuisine/Eastern European) $$

[illegible] 3496 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville, 925-964-5816 (Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

Zachary's Chicago Pizza 3110 Crow Canyon Pl., Suite D, San Ramon, 925-244-1222 (Pizza) $-$$ ■

FOOD & WINE

CULINARY & WINE

[illegible] Chocolate Factory Tour [illegible] only to watch chocolatiers in production. [illegible] Wednesdays, Saturdays, 1:30 p.m. & 2:30 p.m., free. Charles Chocolates Factory Store and Chocolate Bar, 6529 Hollis St., Emeryville, 510-652-4412, CharlesChocolates.com.

Flight Night Featuring winemaker [illegible] Winery, a family-owned business noted for producing small quantities of high-quality wines. Call 925-456-2450 to make reservations. Last Thursday of every month, 5-7 p.m., $22-$50. Wente Vineyards Restaurant, 5050 Arroyo Rd., Livermore, 925-456-2450, WenteVineyards.com.

Scharffen Berger Chocolate Maker Factory Tours Docent-led tours provide samplings and a history of chocolate. Call 510-981-4066 to make reservations. Daily, free. Scharffen Berger, 914 Heinz Ave., Berkeley, ScharffenBerger.com.

FARMERS' MARKETS

[illegible] Farmers' Market Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., free. [illegible] Center, 15555 E. 14th St., San Leandro, 510-357-8000, [illegible].com.

Farm Fresh Choice [illegible] Farmers Market Wednesdays, 3-6:30 p.m., 510-848-9734, EcologyCenter.org. [illegible] Community Center, San Pablo Park, 2800 Park St. (at Oregon St.), Berkeley, 510-981-5350, [illegible].

Irvington Farmers' Market Sundays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., free. Bay St. at Fremont Blvd., Fremont.

Kaiser Permanente Fremont Farmers' Market Thursdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Kaiser Fremont, 39400 Paseo Padre Pkwy., Fremont.

Kaiser Permanente Hayward Farmers' Market Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Kaiser Hayward, 27400 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward.

Kaiser Permanente Farmers' Market Fridays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Kaiser Oakland, 3600 Howe St., Oakland.

Kaiser Permanente Union City Farmers' Market Thursdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Kaiser Medical Center, Union City, 3553 Whipple Rd., Union City.

Kaiser Permanente Walnut Creek Farmers' Market Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Kaiser Walnut Creek, 1425 South Main St., Walnut Creek.

Kensington Farmers' Market Sundays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. ACE Hardware Parking Lot, 303 Arlington Ave., Berkeley.

Laurel Farmers' Market Sundays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Laurel District, [illegible], Oakland, 510-[illegible].

North Berkeley Farmers' Market Thursdays, 3-7 p.m., free admission. 510-548-3333, EcologyCenter.org, Shattuck Ave. at Rose St., Berkeley.

Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Thursdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Court St. between Main & Escobar Sts., Martinez.

Pleasanton Farmers' Market Saturdays, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., free. Pleasanton Farmers' Market, West Angela St., Pleasanton.

Point Richmond Farmers' Market Wednesdays, 3-6 p.m., free. Park Pl. at Washington Ave., Richmond.

San Leandro Downtown Farmers' Market Wednesdays, 4-8 p.m., free. Parrott St. between E. 14th St. & Washington Ave., San Leandro.

Saturday Berkeley Farmers' Market Saturdays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., free. 510-548-3333, EcologyCenter.org. MLK Civic Center Park, 2151 Martin Luther King Jr. Way (between Allston and Center sts.), Berkeley, 510-548-3333.

Temescal Farmers' Market Sundays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., free. DMV Parking Lot, 5300 Claremont Ave., Oakland.

Tuesday Berkeley Farmers' Market Tuesdays, 2-7 p.m., free. 510-548-3333, EcologyCenter.org, Derby St. at Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley. ■

PICK

Wine Luau

Who says wine doesn't go with roasted pig and a funky reggae beat? On Saturday, May 30, the spring open house at **Dashe Cellars Winery** (55 4th St., Oakland) — founded in 1996 by a married pair of enologists — is an **"Urban Luau,"** featuring steel drums, tropical decor, and more. Newly released wines up for the tasting include a dry Riesling and a dry rosé. 1 p.m., $25-$30. DasheCellars.com
— *Anneli Rufus*

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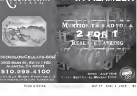

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MOVIES

CON MEN AND COFFINS

Warm hugs, not chills, from *The Brothers Bloom* and *Departures*

By Kelly Vance

Rachel Weisz finally hits her stride in *The Brothers Bloom*.

The Brothers Bloom opens with a cute — almost too cute — montage sequence showing the childhood years of the two orphaned brothers as they run through a succession of unsuccessful foster home situations. The two boys dress in Charlie Chaplin/Orthodox Jewish drag (black suits with black fedoras) and they're fond of constructing elaborate hoaxes to bilk money from the other, luckier kids, the kids with families. Astute moviegoers will recognize the voice of the prologue narrator — it's Ricky Jay, famed magician and trickster. And so it's established that Bloom (Adrien Brody) and his brother Stephen (Mark Ruffalo) are born con men who take great delight in hustling the squares.

That all changes when they meet Penelope Stamp. Gullible heiress Penelope (played by Rachel Weisz) lives by herself in her exaggeratedly nutty New Jersey mansion, enjoys idly crashing her sports car into abutments, and otherwise seems the ideal subject for the brothers' "last" confidence scheme, a bit of flufle involving stolen gems in Europe. (Gangsters eat burglars, and con men are forever embarking on "one last job" in movies, and it's invariably the job in which they fall in love, get caught, or die. Or all three.) It is the work of but a few moments to gain Penelope's trust.

Since Penelope is at loose ends, the suggestion to take an old-fashioned steamship, the SS *Fidele*, across the Atlantic with Bloom, Stephen, and their cohort Bang Bang (Rinko Kikuchi) sounds like a merry diversion to her. She's not even much alarmed when their little party is joined by the comically sinister "Curator" Maximilian Melville (Robbie Coltrane), or when the expression on Bloom's face begins to change from one of saturnine amusement to moon-calf lovey-dovey-ness. That change of mood more or less coincides with the switch from Nino Rota's *Amarcord* music to Cat Stevens on writer-director Rian Johnson's jukebox soundtrack. Who's conning whom? And why?

Johnson impressed many, but not all, with *Brick*, his 2005 film-noir-goes-to-high-school. Its uneasy blend of mannerisms and emotion in the tale of a teenage drug dealer made for a natural intro to the more complicated, less laboriously arch observations of *The Brothers Bloom*. We can take *Bloom*'s gorgeously wrought interiors and exteriors — shot on location in Romania, Montenegro, Serbia, and the Czech Republic — and file them all under Inconsequential Eye Candy. This film's most important geography is on the faces of Brody, Ruffalo, and especially Weisz.

Early on, Bloom's anguish takes the form of a soliloquy in which he longs for "an unwritten life." That's a strange request for such a transparently created character, but Brody captures our confidence, as well. The 36-year-old actor is blessed with the face of a much older man and his most perceptive directors have taken advantage of that, from the Bronx mockney in Spike Lee's *Summer of Sam* to the tormented artist in Polanski's *The Pianist*. With his pork-pie hat, angular features, and weary eyes, Bloom looks completely incapable of selling anything at all, let alone hot artworks. We're quite convinced that he'd much rather hole out in a shack in the Adirondacks than play silly games crawling through air ducts in Prague, no matter how much he stands to win.

Ruffalo's Stephen, the brutal half, has his doubts as well, although they're necessarily more physical. Johnson understands the essential frustration in Ruffalo's screen presence (*Zodiac*, *Reservation Road*) and insists on playing it against the film's most questionable line item: Bang Bang. Kikuchi's troubled adolescent was the weakest of the plotlets in *Babel*, but at least the part had some gristle. Her nauseatingly cute, virtually dialogue-less explosives expert is a step backward for the 28-year-old Japanese actor, another of *Bloom*'s bits of meaningless eye candy. Maybe she was hired to boost business in Asian markets?

Weisz, on the other hand, finally hits her stride in *Bloom* after years of warming up in chick flicks and *Mummy* tussles. Penelope's sadness matches Bloom's, and her "constipated soul" speech strikes a chord with him and with us. Penelope is more than just a mark, she's a necessary ingredient in the life of any hustler, someone he can truly believe in. Besides which she's rich and doesn't mind taking a dare. The caper, the heist, the big score, the grand rip-off machinery of *The Brothers Bloom* take a back seat to the old-world soul restlessness of Bloom and Penelope, with Stephen and his little Bang Bang bringing up the rear. Even con men eventually grow up.

Con men grow up, and people die. That latter news flash is the rock-hard premise of filmmaker Yojiro Takita's *Departures*, no doubt the best movie you'll see this year about the Japanese traditional funeral business, and what it means for a man who's searching, like Bloom, for something to believe in.

Evidently, economic hard times are continuing in Japan. *Departures* is the second film to play here this year, after Kiyoshi Kurosawa's *Tokyo Sonata*, to follow the exploits of a laid-off Japanese urbanite. In this case, Daigo Kobayashi (played by actor Masahiro Motoki), a symphony orchestra cellist, joins the unemployed when his orchestra suddenly disbands. Daigo and his loyal wife Mika (Ryoko Hirosue) decide to relocate to Daigo's old home town in Yamagata prefecture, northeast of Tokyo, where they move into his late mother's house, a funky wood-paneled lodge where she ran a small bar and cafe.

Daigo spots a local newspaper help-wanted ad for the "Departures" business. Assuming it's a travel agency, he visits the office of Ikuei Sasaki (Tsutomu Yamazaki) and his earthy assistant Yuriko (Kimiko Yo), only to discover that the sagely Sasaki-san is a practitioner of "encoffination," the traditional ritual cleansing and preparing of a corpse for cremation, performed in the presence of the deceased's family and close friends. It's a profession with a social stigma attached, but Daigo needs work badly. He hesitantly accepts the job but decides to withhold the details from Mika, at least at first.

What follows — in addition to more *Sunshine Cleaning*-style chuckles on the subject of death and dying — is a warm, wise drama about how to live one's life. Daigo learns to care for his uncomplaining clients with the "gentle affection" he eventually extends to his wife and friends, and takes up the cello again (having sold his concert instrument, he digs up the youth-sized cello he first learned on) with renewed understanding of the soothing effects of music. Director Takita, with help from composer Joe Hisaishi (he did the music for Hayao Miyazaki animated fantasies), gets moving performances from everyone, especially Motoki. ●

Feedback@EastBayExpress.com

The Brothers Bloom

Written and directed by Rian Johnson. With Adrien Brody, Mark Ruffalo, Rachel Weisz, Rinko Kikuchi, Robbie Coltrane, and Maximilian Schell. Opens Friday.

Departures

Directed by Yojiro Takita. With Masahiro Motoki, Ryoko Hirosue, Tsutomu Yamazaki, and Kimiko Yo. Opens Friday.

MOVIES & THEATERS

To learn where a movie is playing, note the abbreviations at the end of each listing, then consult the theater guide at the bottom of this page. Capsule reviews are written by Andrea Gronvall (A.G.), Cole Haddon (C.H.), J.R. Jones (J.J.), and Kelly Vance (K.V.). For a schedule of repertory films, see One-Night Stands at the end of these listings. Please send info fourteen days before event date to editor@eastbayexpress.com

Due to the holiday weekend, listings are incomplete. Please check with theaters before heading out.

OPENING

Big Man Japan Tedious fantasy about a semi-honest man named Daisato whose job is to be transformed into a gigantic [illegible] superhero in order to battle such kaiju as the Evil Stare Monster and the Strangling Monster — in cheesy CGI alternating with lackluster live action. The [illegible] Hitoshi Matsumoto [illegible] his neighbors for making such a mess of their town. [illegible] (113 min.) (K.V.) S

The Brothers Bloom Con men siblings Adrien Brody and Mark Ruffalo zigzag around Europe hatching schemes to separate a gullible heiress (Rachel Weisz at her most radiant) from her millions, but Rian Johnson's visually rich drama is more of a European-style atmospheric romance than a heist flick, with lovely lovesick Brody and Weisz doing most of the connecting while Ruffalo and his [illegible] female sidekick (Rinko Kikuchi from *Babel*) supply the explosions and rough stuff. Writer-director Johnson (*Brick*) stocks the travelogue with [illegible] allusions to Herman Melville's *The Confidence Man* and sly cameos by Robbie Coltrane, Maximilian Schell, and narrator Ricky Jay. Eye candy with a soul. (113 min.) [illegible]

Drag Me to Hell Alison Lohman (*Beowulf*, *Flicka*) stars as Christine Brown, a loan officer who finds herself on the wrong end of a supernatural curse. Directed by Sam Raimi and written by Sam and his brother Ivan (99 min.). CUC, [illegible]

AL, [illegible], UAEB

Easy Virtue Noel Coward's England is a place in which a young playboy (Ben Barnes) brings his beautiful, willful, race-car-driver wife (Jessica Biel) to meet the family in their palatial country estate, whereupon the new wife and the imperious mother-in-law (Kristin Scott Thomas) spend the rest of the film hissing at each other. Biel and Scott Thomas clearly have a ball with their bitch-fest, [illegible] and abetted gleefully by director Stephan Elliott (*The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*), who adapted Coward's 1924 play with Sheridan Jobbins. Colin Firth is also good as the father-in-law, a [illegible] bohemian who likes to [illegible] with engines. Vastly preferable to *Brideshead Revisited* (93 min.). (K.V.) AL

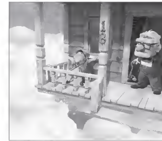
Up The third 3-D animation from Pixar follows a pie-eyed wannabe aviator and his [illegible] boat pal through [illegible] and a blissful [illegible]

Showtimes Online

Movie showtimes and online ticket-buying at EastBayExpress.com

Theater Guide

The guide explains the abbreviations at the end of each capsule. **AL** = Albany; **ATT** = Alameda Theater & Cineplex; **BB** = [illegible]; **BB** = Blackhawk; **BP** = [illegible]; **BS** = Bay Street; **CA** = California; **CAPH** = [illegible]; **CE** = [illegible]; **CUC** = Contra Costa Cinemas; **CPPK** = Century Pleasant Hill; **CE** = Century Hilltop; **CHY** = Century Hayward; **CN** = Cinedome Newark; **CRC** = Crow Canyon; **CSC** = Chabot Space and Science; **CUC** = Century Union City; **CWC** = Century Walnut Creek; **DV** = Deer Valley; **EC** = El Cerrito Speakeasy; **GL** = Grand Lake; **JL** = Jack London; **LP** = La Peña; **MB** = [illegible]; **OA** = Oaks; **OR** = Orinda; **PM** = Piedmont; **RA** = [illegible]; **RCE** = Rialto Cinemas Elmwood; **RH** = Regal Hacienda; **ST** = [illegible]; **UAB** = UA Berkeley; **UAEB** = UA Emery Bay; **V** = Vine; **WWS** = West Wind Solano



A scene from Pixar's new animation *Up*.

earthbound marriage. Years later the hero, now a bitter old widower (voiced by Ed Asner), ties his home with hundreds of helium balloons in hopes of making the South American trip he'd always promised his wife. When he and an unwelcome young stowaway (Jordan Nagai) land in a mountain jungle populated by a gangly rare bird and a pack of talking dogs, the elderly crank finds himself way out of his comfort zone. Writer-directors Pete Docter and Bob Peterson bring hilarious insights into both human and canine psychology and treat thornier human emotions deftly, ending with the felicitous wisdom that only by letting go of the past can we find ourselves in [illegible] (96 min.) (A.G.) CUC S CNC RA, [illegible]

ONGOING

17 Again A no-trend but [illegible] youth-market comedy makes predictable feel-good use of the story of a 37-year-old loser named Mike (Matthew Perry) who wakes up one day in his seventeen-year-old body (played by teen idol Zac Efron) and goes back to high school in 2009 as "Mark." [illegible] female fans may be surprised by the success in [illegible] [illegible] the sexual advances of his own daughter (Michelle Trachtenberg) and then gets the moves on his ex-wife (Leslie Mann). Directed in typical TV sitcom style by former actor Burr Steers from a screenplay by Jason Filardi, with Thomas Lennon hamming famously as the [illegible] fanboy best friend (95 min.) (K.V.) CWC CUC RA, [illegible]

Adoration Arts. Arsinée Khanjian, longtime muse and wife of Atom Egoyan's stock company, turns in a wonderfully strong performance as a high-school teacher with a guilty secret — one of many recurrent aspects of plot in Egoyan's ambitious detective story about an orphaned teenager named Simon (Devon Bostick) looking to grip with the loss of his parents in a car crash years before. Writer-director Egoyan (*Where the Truth Lies*, *The Sweet Hereafter*) has said the greater [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] looking drama. It's Egoyan's version of a social drama. With Scott Speedman, Rachel Blanchard, and Kenneth Welsh (100 min.) (K.V.) RCE

Adventureland An '80s nostalgia comedy that actually looks like a [illegible] made in the '80s. James, a college grad with no particular prospects (Jesse Eisenberg), takes a summer job at the trailer amusement park in his hometown of Pittsburgh — partly in an effort to remedy his virginity. The plot meanders. The pic's main selling points are its amiable, true-to-life characters: the proprietor (Bill Hader), the local Lothario (Martin Starr), a Madonna lookalike (Margarita Levieva) and James's one true love, Em (Kristen Stewart from *Twilight*). Has all the allure of *American Graffiti* but not enough of John Hughes's kaleidoscope. Writer-director Greg Mottola's dialogue is a standout (107 min.) (K.V.) UAE

Angels & Demons Who is killing off the College of Cardinals? Tom Hanks, reprising his role from *The Da Vinci Code* as professor/sleuth Robert Langdon, races through half the churches and dungeons of Rome trying to head off an explosion that would destroy the Vatican. It's a plot by those old devils, the Illuminati, courtesy of hyperventilating novelist Dan Brown. Nice travelogue scenery and prime evening chase sequences, but [illegible] Ron Howard into the religious shock and awe — not to mention the spooky splendor of St. Peter's — overpowers the film's rationalism. It's a Sherlock Holmes for devout Catholics. The corny speeches, by Brown via Hanks [illegible] Akiva Goldsman would make a bishop blush. Material this richly ridiculous should have been directed by someone who shares [illegible] ardor, like Dario Argento. Costarring Ewan McGregor, Ayelet Zurer, Stellan Skarsgård, Pierfrancesco Favino and Armin Mueller-Stahl (138 min.) (K.V.) ATC BC BP CWC CH CEPH CH CUC CH BH CGC, GL, GR, ER, CRC, RA, PH, 3L, BT

Cosmic Voyage Morgan Freeman explains the universe to you in a 36-min. IMAX documentary. CSC

Dance Flick From director Damien Wayans, the latest movie spoof (think *Epic Movie*, *Scary Movie*) set its sights on the story of a street dancer Thomas Uncles (Damon Wayans Jr.) who teams with the beautiful Megan White (Shoshana Bush) in hopes of winning a huge dance battle. BC BP CWC CEPH CH CGC CHY CW RA WWS

Dinosaurs Alive! From the Triassic to the Cretaceous, fossils are uncovered by paleontologists and portrayed in realistic CGI. CSC

Dragonball Evolution Goku (Justin Chatwin) is just your average everyday teenage martial-arts master with a magical Dragon ball. In *Dragonball Evolution*, he goes head-to-head with green-skinned Piccolo (James Marsters), who wants Goku's ball, because once he has all of seven he'll be able to start the apocalypse or something like that. Master Roshi (Chow Yun-Fat, further degrading his name, here) runs Goku's training as he has the skills necessary to stop said end of the world and, oh yeah, he's becoming a were-ape. Don't worry — everyone else in the theater will be too (84 min.) (C.R.) [illegible]

Earth This feat mounted from Disney's new nature division has an encyclopedic reach and spectacular footage shot by more than two dozen crack cinematographers. The main narrative is about three wildlife animal families — polar bears, nomad elephants, and a humpbacked whale and her calf — over the course of a year, digressing to cover many other exotic species. About a quarter of the footage comes from the 2006 BBC miniseries *Planet Earth*, and the grim bear story mirrors one in National Geographic's large-format documentary *Arctic Tale* (2007). But this is a bit above the standard: directors Alastair Fothergill and Mark Linfield, who collaborated on the TV show, they know how to craft a sequence ([illegible] elephants uneasily drinking at the same water hole), have an eye for the telling shot (baboons [illegible]) and eventually allow [illegible] looking the [illegible] James Earl Jones narrates, [illegible] (A.G.) ATC BC CWC CAPH OA RH

Every Little Step Fans of Broadway musicals in general and the late Michael Bennett's *A Chorus Line* in particular will probably love this documentary about the 2006 Broadway revival of [illegible], but everyone else [illegible] probably too much of an arguably good thing. The doc follows hopefuls auditioning for the show [illegible] group of [illegible] hopefuls. Co-directors James D. Stern and Adam Del Deo create a [illegible] of [illegible] — take the [illegible] (96 min.) (K.V.) CAPH AL

Forces of Nature Learn about the causes of earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, and hurricanes [illegible] and be [illegible] by their effects on [illegible] in a National Geographer's large IMAX [illegible]. CSC

Ghosts of Girlfriends Past "When did casual sex become a crime?" asks Matthew McConaughey in this lively romantic comedy. A photographer infamous for his womanizing, he gets an unwanted lesson in his past when the ghost of a playboy uncle (Michael Douglas, enjoying himself) visits on the eve of a family wedding and [illegible] him [illegible]. Writers Jon Lucas & Scott Moore, the best, gleefully cribbing from *A Christmas Carol* to fashion a screenplay with heart and sharp one-liners. Jennifer Garner is sweet and radiant as McConaughey's childhood friend and former lover. Lacey Chabert giggles senseless as the woman marrying McConaughey's [illegible] brother, and Robert Forster and Anne Archer are good as her parents. Mark Waters (*The Spiderwick Chronicles*, *Mean Girls*) directs (100 min.) (A.G.) ATC BC CWC CEPH CH, CUC CHY ER, CRC RA RH 3L RT

The Girlfriend Experience Chelsea, the high-priced escort in Steven Soderbergh's drama (played by adult film star Sasha Grey) is a commodity herself. As she and her gym trainer/gigolo boyfriend (Chris Santos) try to market themselves in recessionary Manhattan, all her clients want to talk about, is the economy

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MARK RUFFALO RINKO KIKUCHI
TheBrothersBloom.com
STARTS FRIDAY, MAY 29

Alison Lohman as Christine Brown in *Drag Me to Hell*

MOT

Another chapter by the director of *Che*: it's no *Pretty Woman*. In its brittly stylized portraiture, this study of a prostitute (written by frequent Soderbergh collaborators Brian Koppelman and David Levien) is closer to Godard's *Two or Three Things I Know About Her*... a chilly, dry critique of capitalism with a complete zero at its centre. (78 min.) (K.V.) VM, S

Goodbye Solo This quiet, closely observed "buddy road movie" drama probes the relationship between a lonely, bitter old Southerner named William (played by former Chris Presley pal Red West) and Solo, the West African immigrant taxi driver (newcomer Souléymane Sy Savané) who takes him under his wing. Winston-Salem, North Carolina: Shades of a 21st-century *Driving Miss Daisy*, but director Ramin Bahrani, who wrote the screenplay with Bahareh Azimi, came the film's uncomplicated pathos honestly. Just because we can see the tears coming doesn't mean they're any less unearned. Acting kudos to young Diana Franco Galindo as Solo's stepdaughter Alex. (91 min.) (K.V.) S

The Human Body Ever wonder how your body does what it does – without your having to tell it to? Find out in this fascinating trip through (your guided in) the human body. Watch a tomato's journey south, ear cells dancing to music, and a 250-mph sneeze and impulse. CSC

I Love You, Man A comedic rebound on a "man cave" and all its complications, *I Love You, Man* explores a world often ignored by cinema. Paul Rudd plays a mid-level LA real-estate agent notorious for being a "girlfriend guy," so, when he gets engaged and realizes he doesn't have any genuine male friends to stand on his side of the altar, he sets out trying to find his first best friend. His search delivers unto him a slobbish man-child played by Jason Segel. Their burgeoning bromance begins to consume Rudd's life and soon even threatens his relationship. It might feel like a second-rate Judd Apatow production with a one-note joke, but the laughs remarkably never stop. (C.H.) V

Il Divo Writer-director Paolo Sorrentino's bizarre-there docudrama tries to unmask the soul man behind the grey exterior of Giulio Andreotti, Italy's [illegible] Pope, [illegible] Sphinx, Hunchback and Senator for Life – the most powerful and mysterious man in the country. Actor Toni Servillo plays Christian Democrat politician Andreotti as a robotic little man, scurrying through painful sessions ending the ousted for industrialists, the church, and the mafia, while fending off investigations and fleeing out epigrams like "You live longer without needs." Filmmaker Sorrentino takes full advantage of the settings for Godfather-style visuals evoking political melodrama's trial on corruption and thanks, charges. Worth a look for fans of history and crime – aren't they more or less the same? (110 min.) (K.V.) RC

Is Anybody There? Why old champ Michael Caine and British young challenger Bill Milner (*Son of Rambow*) go toe-to-toe in a battle royal of mascots about a cranky, heartbroken former magician and the sensitive but ghost-obsessed boy he meets when he moves into the kid's parents' senior citizens' home in the North of England. Caine wins by a TKO in the seventh round but it's nip and tuck all the way, thanks to Peter Harness' screenplay – no story left behind in the death department. Supporting, particularly by John Crowley who's done better work in *The Boy A*. Costarring Anne-Marie Duff and Morrissey on Mum and Dad. (95 min.) (K.V.) CAPH, RCE, Y

The Living Sea You've seen amazing *Nemo*; now see the real thing. It's a trip to the bottom of the ocean narrated by Meryl Streep, with Imax and music by Sting. CSC

Management Quirky little love story builds an its own whimsicality until we come to think of the sky. Bad bright motel keeper (Steve Zahn) and the traveling saleswoman he becomes infatuated with (Jennifer Aniston) as more than the sum of their parts. Quite an achievement for odd-time writer-director Stephen Belber who puts oddly eccentric parts from indie paragon Zahn, woman queen Aniston, eccentric absolute Woody Harrelson and dear Fred Ward, and sympathetic guy James Liao. Could have been a Psycho remake with very little tweaking – instead, it's a bug-free (93 min.) (K.V.) CAPH, DAEB

Monsters Vs. Aliens When a bride-to-be gets hit by an errant meteorite, she quickly grows to ginormous proportions. That gets her hauled away to a secret prison where monsters like Dr. Cockroach, the oozing Link, B.O.B. and Insectosaurus are housed – essentially a B-horror super-team with the 50 Foot Woman, the Fly, the Creature from the Black Lagoon, the Blob, and even some sort of Godzilla/Mothra hybrid. Their job, if they choose to pursue it (and they do), is to battle an alien invasion that is significantly less successful at paying homage to B-movie things. The result is a fun-enough ride thanks primarily to the cast's voice work, including Reese Witherspoon, Hugh Laurie and Seth Rogen. Too bad the movie's embrace-your-monster message feels so forced. Three days (94 min.) (C.H.) ATC, BG, CWC, CB, CEPH, CH, CUC, RA, RH

Mysteries of Egypt National Geographic and a team of scientists reveal the architecture, legends, history – and most importantly mysteries – of ancient Egyptian civilization. CSC

Next Day Air Theatrical teases have tagged this atmospheric crime comedy a "successor to *Guy Ritchie* sleepers," but a better comparison would be last year's underappreciated *In Bruges*. A cannabis-pointed Philadelphia delivery man (Donald Faison) misroutes a payload of dope to two brain-dead petty thugs (Mike Epps and Wood Harris) who can't believe their luck. Vengeful kingpin Emilio Rivera menaces through the Philly underworld when the sender and intended recipient come looking for their missing bricks. Director Benny Boom and screenwriter Blair Cobbs pull off the tough trick of investing profoundly stupid characters with humanity while cinematographer David Armstrong plays gleefully with the green-x-vision palette of *The Transporter*. (84 min.) (C.O.) BS, BC, CP, CB, CH, CLC, CHY, RA, RH, L, UAB

Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian How to turn a thin wonder out of a sequel. Send Ben Stiller and an army of CGI critters through a second round of slapstick educational. Add a few walk-ons. This time with Napoleon, Ivan the Terrible and Al Capone with sidekick Eckhart (Amy Adams). A close case of diarrhea of the cinema – co-starring a galaxy of once-interesting actors including Owen Wilson, Steve Coogan, Hank Azaria (as Boris Karloff imitation), Christopher Guest, and inevitable Robin Williams as Teddy Roosevelt. The series feels like it's about to go on forever. Robert Ben Garant and Thomas Lennon wrote the screenplay. Directed by Shawn Levy. (105 min.) (K.V.) ATC, BG, BC, BP, CWC, CB, CEPH, CH, CUC, CHY, CM, CLC, EH, CCC, ME, RR, CRC, RA, RH, JL, RT, UAB, WWS

Obsessed This blissful entry in the psycho-bitch stalker sweepstakes is inept and stupid but not without its trashy attractions. Idris Elba (*The Wire*) is a financier whose failure to set boundaries with a psychotic temp (Ali Larter) endangers his otherwise perfect marriage to Beyoncé Knowles. While scenes between Elba and Larter have a certain crass tension, he and Knowles share all the chemistry of frozen fish sticks. The dreadful script delivers unintentional laughs while gallantly dodging the race angle, and the actors mess around... Elba's front-cover... (Jerry O'Connell) and his sharp gay secretary (Bruce Humphreys)... do more to takes the tone than the ballyhooed cat fight climax. *Three or* Steve Shill is a TV journeyman and works to rate (105 min.) (C.H.) BC, BP, CWC, CB, CEPH, CH, CUC, CHY, RA, RH, JL, UAB, UAEB

Race to Witch Mountain Part remake, part re-imagining, *Race to Witch Mountain* is the Mouse House's latest stab at resurrecting old transforms, [illegible] Jack Bruno (Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson) has to help two alien teens, Sara and Seth (AnnaSophia Robb and Alexander Ludwig) reach the [illegible] to prevent an alien invasion of Earth, and to do so they must evade a Predator-grade hunter called Siphon and familiar Men in Black [illegible] ETs. Little feels original, but Johnson remains one of the most likable leading men working today. He could do better; [illegible] could definitely be worse. Starring [illegible] Carla Gugino as an astrophysicist [illegible] (98 min.) (C.H.) V

Rudo y Cursi Gael García Bernal and Diego Lana, the Y Tu Mamá También boys, portray a pair of back-country Mexican brothers catapulted from a banana plantation to the big-time [illegible] life in Mexico City [illegible] Carlos Cuarón's [illegible] comic [illegible] study [illegible] of rampant [illegible]. Writer-director Cuarón (brother of Alfonso Cuarón, who produced along with fellow filmmakers Alejandro González Iñárritu and Guillermo del Toro) stocks the film with broad, lusty characters — Cursi and Rudo [illegible] crudest [illegible] and business [illegible], but his intentions are hard as a diamond (103 min.) (K.V.) CB CUC CAPH PM S UAEB

Sin Nombre The gang-bangers and [illegible] in Cary Fukunaga's [illegible] road-trip [illegible] in common — they're driven [illegible] the US [illegible] where the [illegible] of a young [illegible] Casper (Edgar Flores) and a young woman [illegible] Sayra (Paulina Gaitán) [illegible] an exceedingly bleak [illegible] Mexico and [illegible]. Writer-director Fukunaga, an Oakland [illegible] delivers performances from his non-actors. [illegible] cinematographer [illegible] So what if Casper and Sayra's love story happens on the run? It feels [illegible] The US-Mexican co-prod also stars [illegible] (96 min.) (K.V.) [illegible] RCE

The Soloist [illegible] Robert [illegible] performances of Jamie Foxx, as a [illegible] and Robert Downey as the newspaper columnist [illegible] UK [illegible] director Joe Wright (Atonement, Pride & Prejudice) keeps [illegible] side of Los Angeles [illegible] world [illegible]. The screenplay, from LA Times reporter Steve Lopez' book [illegible] by Susannah Grant (Erin Brockovich) [illegible] newspaper style [illegible] (109 min.) (K.V.) ATC, BS, CWC, CAPH, EA, CRC, RR, RH, JL, RCE

Star Trek J.J. Abrams reboots the [illegible] in Star Trek, and in the [illegible] resurrects a Summer [illegible] thought was past. This was accomplished by [illegible] Captain Jean-Luc Picard's The Next Generation) to the last [illegible] Kirk, Spock, and Dr. McCoy [illegible] the Enterprise [illegible] the original television series. Thanks to a [illegible] time-traveling Spock (Leonard Nimoy) from the future [illegible] Abrams manages to [illegible] a bit and [illegible] surprise to the proceedings. Recasting is admirable (especially Zachary Quinto and Karl Urban as Spock and McCoy), and the [illegible] will make newbies want to [illegible] Starfleet (126 min.) (C.H.) ATC BS BC BP CWC CB CAPH CH CUC CNY CM [illegible] CCC GL, CA, [illegible] RR, RH, JL, RT

State of Play Russell Crowe and Rachel McAdams are reporters for the Washington Globe (aka Post) trying to [illegible] the [illegible] death of a congressional [illegible] and [illegible] a [illegible] senator (Ben Affleck), and investigating the abuses of the giant [illegible] contractor PointCorp (aka Blackwater [illegible]). This [illegible] thriller was [illegible] from a 2003 BBC miniseries, with a few [illegible] newspapers [illegible] lightweight blogger McAdams [illegible] Kevin Macdonald (The Last King of Scotland) directed, with [illegible] Robin Wright Penn, and Jason Bateman (127 min.) (J.J.) CA, RH, V

Summer Hours When their mother dies, her [illegible] grown children — Juliette Binoche, Charles Berling, and Jérémie Renier — [illegible] decide what to do with her grand [illegible] house [illegible] masterpieces [illegible] famous [illegible]. That's the situation, but writer-director Olivier Assayas [illegible] beneath the surface to capture the [illegible] everything eventually [illegible] the three principals, although the real [illegible] of this [illegible] the Art Nouveau and Art Deco pieces, which go from being part of a living household to [illegible] display in the Musée d'Orsay (103 min.) (K.V.) AL

Sunshine Cleaning [illegible] Amy Adams and Emily Blunt [illegible] two [illegible] Albuquerque [illegible] income [illegible] and [illegible] are anything but [illegible] Alan Arkin [illegible] and Clifton Collins as a sympathetic store [illegible] another "cinematic special" (102 min.) (K.V.) S, UAEB, V

Terminator Salvation Fourth installment (not counting the TV series) of the [illegible] popular humans-vs.-machines [illegible] time-traveling hero of humanity John Connor (Christian Bale) against [illegible] robots bent on stamping out humankind, with [illegible] help from [illegible] (Sam Worthington) [illegible] McG (Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle) [illegible] liberally from Mad Max and Stanley Kubrick [illegible] (115 min.) (K.V.) ATC BC BP CWC [illegible] CAPH CH CUC CNY GN [illegible] RR, RH, JL, UAEB, WMS

Treeless Mountain [illegible] South Korean [illegible] by writer-director Kim So-yong [illegible] Kim Hee-yeon and Kim Song-hee [illegible] (89 min.) (K.V.) RCE

Tyson Director James Toback's [illegible] boxer Mike Tyson during the filming of the former's The Pick-Up Artist, and the result is an intriguing [illegible] documentary [illegible] answers many [illegible] questions about Tyson's notorious career as a [illegible] heavyweight champion in the '80s and '90s. [illegible] His recollections are illustrated by news footage [illegible] of his rape conviction [illegible] allegations, and Tyson's [illegible] of Evander Holyfield [illegible] (90 min.) (K.V.) S

X-Men Origins: Wolverine Parts of X-Men Origins: Wolverine don't [illegible] nearly as bad as X-Men: The Last Stand, which is a mixed compliment. Then again, there are parts that are worse. [illegible] that, despite the movie's title, Wolverine (again played by Hugh Jackman) is shortchanged in terms of [illegible]. For example, we already knew pretty much everything we hear about the Weapon X program, except how other mutants were used to create it. We do find that Logan has a brother, Sabretooth (Liev Schreiber) [illegible] never explains why they [illegible] (107 min.) (C.H.) ATC, BC, BP, CWC, CB, CAPH, CH, CUC, CNY, CLC, CCC, SL, [illegible]

Showtimes Online

Movie showtimes and online ticket-buying at EastBayExpress.com

ONE NIGHT STANDS

FRIDAY, MAY 29

Cruel Story of Youth (96 min., 1960). In the Realm of Oshima (PFA, 6:30)

Diary of a Shinjuku Thief (94 min., 1969). In the Realm of Oshima (PFA, 8:30)

SATURDAY, MAY 30

Amadeus (158 min., 1984). Sound designer [illegible] Berger in person. Quality Control: Selected Works from Zoetrope Films (PFA, 7:00)

SUNDAY, MAY 31

[illegible] Hyperion or Liberty, Equality, Brotherhood (207 min., 1992). [illegible] (PFA, 2:00)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3

The Unbearable Lightness of Being (171 min., 1988). [illegible] in person. Quality Control: Selected Works from Zoetrope Films (PFA, 7:00)

[illegible] Way to Go: Life at the End of the Empire (123 min., 2007). Preceded by a discussion (Humanist Hall, Oakland, 7:30)

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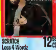

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MUSIC

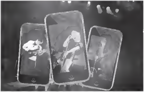
A MUSIC APP FOR EVERY OCCASION

From four-tracks to fart sounds, the iPhone's got our ear

By Nate Seltenrich

Nobody needs an iPhone. This is the first and most important thing to consider about Apple's iPhone, in fact, because there's simply nothing cool about owning a necessity. Toothbrush? Socks? Not cool. Roomba? Slap Chop? Slightly cooler, perhaps. But the iPhone is second to none in the world of must-have gadgets, both by virtue of its prohibitive price ($199, plus steep monthly fees), slick design, and abundance of entirely useless features.

Some of these features are built into the device, but most are produced by outside developers and bestowed upon Apple for distribution via iTunes. These downloadable applications ("apps") escalate the iPhone's overall frivolity, and hence desirability, to heretofore-unseen levels — surpassing that of even the iPod. Apple's application development scheme has been a huge success, resulting in tens of thousands of new programs that are, to varying degrees, completely unnecessary. Among them are at least 1,300 music-related apps, which should be judged not on the basis of how they make our lives better, but on how they make them more fun. Here are ten that do just that, or at least die trying.



With the right app, your iPhone can rock.

[illegible] by Brian Kelly

Pandora. The net's best music recommendation engine, based in Oakland, goes handheld. Tell Pandora which artist or genre you like and hear more of the same. The underground rap channel opened with the Roots' "Guns Are Drawn," followed by Dilated Peoples' "No Retreat." Smashing Pumpkins radio warmed up with "Cherub Rock," then transitioned to Nirvana's "In Bloom." While songs are playing, peruse artist bios and attempt to decipher Pandora's inner workings (to wit: "We're playing this track because it features danceable beats, a poetic rap delivery, the use of chordal patterning, a dry recording sound ...") Like, totally. Free.

Bandloop. Say you're wandering the streets alone at night — not for a warm meal, a place to crash, or even just a friend. All you want is live music. But how to find it? Simply bust out the Bandloop app and breathe a sigh of relief. Enter your zip code or use the search function to pinpoint your exact location. Up comes a map showing every concert for that evening and the next day. Touch the screen for more information including venue contact info and artist web sites. The interface is solid, but the listings for smaller clubs could stand to be beefed up. Free.

PocketGuitar. For those who rue the day the guitar went Guitar Hero, behold: Pocket Guitar. Or not. While this simulator boasts enough bells and whistles (six guitar types, including a realistic effects such as distortion, delay, and chorus; string bends, hammer-ons, and note slides) to woo any guitar aficionado, cumbersome playability renders them moot. It's nearly impossible to quickly position four fingers on the screen in the shape of a chord you're used to playing, and getting sound from the strum of an open chord is even trickier. You can move up and down the neck, but only four frets at a time. I managed to play "Ode to Joy" and promptly got bored. $0.99.

Bloom. Get lost in your very own ambient Brian Eno track! Produced by Eno and musician/software designer Peter Chilvers, Bloom is a simple, almost Zen-like app that allows the user to create an ambient soundscape based upon looped piano notes with a long delay time. Tap the screen to produce a note. A pastel-colored circle appears that will simultaneously expand and dissolve into the background like a ripple in a placid lake. From top to bottom, the notes range from high to low, and there are nine moods to play with, which subtly modify the tone. They're all profoundly calming. $3.99.

Fart Piano. Why create a fart sound generator for the iPhone? The question, dear reader, is why not? Fart apps happen to be some of the hottest downloads Apple offers, led by Pull My Finger and its onerous iFart Mobile (a 99-cent program that raked in around $10,000 per day at its peak last December). Fart Piano is one of the fifty-odd fart followers available. Using a keyboard interface, it provides a complete octave of farts in three different modes: Dry, Wet, and Sampler, which maximizes the element of surprise. I played "Ode to Joy" on this one and wasn't bored a bit. Free.

Ocarina. At its welcome screen, Ocarina offers to teach you how to play — but who needs instructions when you can just wing it? Blow into the mouthpiece and place your fingers over the four "holes" on the screen to produce sound. It's a gimmick, a party trick, not something you'll spend much time with — unless you start an iPhone band (which, mind you, has been done). That's until you dig in to bonus features like the global map that allows you to listen in on other users' recorded streams. Turns out it's a sophisticated, polished app with remarkable flexibility. $0.99.

DigiDrummer Lite. Professional drum machines are complex devices with steep learning curves. Hence DigiDrummer Lite, a free iPhone app that dumbs-down the drum machine about as far as it'll go: eight pads (two toms, crash, ride, kick, snare, and open/closed high hat) and the ability to record and play back. The program's interface responsiveness and sound quality are about as good as one could ask from an iPhone. Getting the hang of it? Upgrade to DigiDrummer Micro ($0.99) for eight different drum sets and improved functionality, or full DigiDrummer ($1.99) for 26 sets, a custom kit maker, an overdubbing mode, a beat library, and more. Free.

DeadMau5. Make like a DJ with this alluring app featuring beats by Toronto house DJ Joel Zimmerman aka DeadMau5. It's preloaded with five four-bar loops (there's no way to produce more of your own) and features an innovative interface allowing the user to crossfade between two parallel tracks, adjust effects including loop, filter, flange, and delay, and modify speed from 108 beats per minute to a blistering 148. DeadMau5 is nearly idiot-proof, and I have it on good authority that you can run that bad boy through a PA and roll a rockin' fifteen-minute DJ set from your phone. $2.99.

FourTrack. Only an idiot would spend $10 on an iPhone app. Well, sure, unless that app is FourTrack and the idiot in question is also a musician. Then it just might make sense to buy this elementary yet intuitive four-track recording program — it could come in handy for demoing songs or recording new ideas on the go. Without any real instruments handy, I put it to the test: a fork hitting a plate, snapping fingers, low humming, and a little singing. After a few adjustments to level and channel (the only editing options available), my mini-song sounded just fine. No harm in saving it for future inspiration. $9.99.

Shazam. The most magical app of all. Hold your phone up to a sound source (including a live concert, if the studio version is similar), and after ten to fifteen seconds it'll tell you all you need to know. Curtis Mayfield's 1970 song "Move on Up" playing on my computer speakers was promptly pegged. Pinback's cover of Camper van Beethoven's "Wasted" was tagged as "Wasted!" with erroneous artist name the O.C. Mix 8. Shazam still earns props for recognizing this obscure cover, and with a database of more than eight million songs delivers far more hits than misses. Free. ●

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BEYOND THE SMALL CHAMBER

Matt Small and Mitch Marcus bring their heavy-handed approach to the chamber music realm

By Rachel Swan

Matt Small

Roughly eight years have passed since Matt Small met Mitch Marcus at Oakland's Stork Club, but Small hasn't gotten over that initial bedazzlement. Marcus, a Long Island-raised saxophonist with an unrepressed imagination, was performing with the art rock band Mega Mousse that night. Small was there to hang out. He recalls being fascinated by the young sax player. Small was even more impressed when he saw Marcus' eighteen-piece big band (Mitch Marcus Quintet +13) a couple years later.

At that time Matt Small was already immersed in the Bay Area art rock scene. He had moved to San Francisco from his hometown of Philadelphia in 1997 and turned himself into a gun-for-hire. He anchored rhythm sections in several groups that varied in quality (his favorite was a bizarre quartet called Eskimo). But outside the art rock world Small trafficked in canonical forms. He led an experimental chamber group called Crushing Spiral Ensemble. He could easily switch from jazz grooves to classical ostinatos. He was drawn to similarly high-caliber musicians whose rock or pop gigs belied their talent and sophistication. Marcus, he thought, was one of them.

It made sense for them to join forces, said Small. After all, the two seemed like spiritual twins. Both had begun composing music in high school, had a penchant for writing extremely difficult material, and were voracious listeners who could poach from any genre. Both were — and are — a little eccentric.

"I doubted you at first," said Marcus, when the two sat side-by-side during a recent interview at Marcus' North Berkeley flat.

"There's much to doubt," Small confessed.

Small learned to play bass (both electric and upright) in middle school and started writing music a few years later. As he got older the music got more and more complex. So complex, in fact, that he couldn't play it on four strings any more — the chord voicings got too muddy, he said. He now plays custom-made electric basses with two extra high strings, so that the top half has a guitar's range while the bottom half plays a normal bass range. Small writes music the way some people write e-mail — prolific would be an understatement. And, said Marcus, it's always hard to play. "When I joined his band I think somebody said 'You had it coming to you.'"

Marcus is not exactly known for restraint either. He plays in no less than half a dozen groups, including the Afrofunk group Aphrodesia and folk fusion outfit Japonize Elephants, in addition to Crushing Spiral and Matt Small's Chamber Ensemble. Formerly a clarinet player, he's proficient at just about every instrument in the woodwind family. He's seemingly indefatigable, having run a weekly jam session at San Francisco's Amnesia nightclub for five years. He writes arrangements for a variety of Bay Area musicians (most recently, a Weimar-era cabaret tune for Andrea Fultz's German Projekt). He plays piano for his wife's dance classes (she's the artistic director at Berkeley Ballet Theater) and for a new trio called the Invaders, which will open for Matt Small's Chamber Ensemble on Friday, May 29, at the Hillside Club in Berkeley. It will be Marcus' last hurrah before he moves back to New York.

What most distinguishes Marcus and Small from other workhorses is that they've built their careers playing difficult material. To be a professional musician is one thing; to make a living without sacrificing your artistic integrity is another. It requires talent, for sure, but also doggedness and intensity of purpose. It took a lot of shilling for Small and Marcus to rise up in the food chain, but at this point they play their own music on a pretty consistent basis. Marcus mostly pens for his quintet or the Invaders, while Small divides his time between three of his own bands: Crushing Spiral, the Matt Small Chamber Ensemble, and a cabaret group called the Bedlam Revels. Both of them write music in a through-composed style (meaning melodies with a full narrative arc rather than a simple head-and-bridge structure) that many people would characterize as "classical." They often watch sports while practicing their instruments. They enjoy games that require a lot of hand-eye coordination, and sometimes hit the tennis courts together. (Marcus usually wins.)

Small promises to unveil several new pieces at the Hillside show, some of which use jazz improvisation in a classical template (e.g., a couple ensemble members will improvise while others play a fixed melody line). He says the music will alternately sound sensitive and "heavy handed." He doesn't expect things to go entirely as planned. Marcus, for instance, agreed to play soprano sax in the chamber group, but will probably bring a whole arsenal of other woodwinds anyway. A band mutiny is always possible, Small acknowledged. He finds the idea titillating. ●

Rachel.Swan@EastBayExpress.com

Show Details

Matt Small's Chamber Ensemble co-headlines with the Invaders Trio on May 29, at the Berkeley Hillside Club (2286 Cedar St.), 8 p.m. $10-$15. MattSmall.org

CD REVIEWS

LAUREL CANYON CIRCA 1968

Happy hippie psychedelia, Django Reinhardt disciples, and bossa nova local.

Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeroes

Up From Below

One can imagine the dozen or so members of this LA band (lead by Ima Robot's Alex Ebert) meeting at some chill keg party in the hills. All the men are bearded and shirtless. All the women are hot in that come-hither hippy kind of way. After hours engaged in some fantastic unself-conscious orgy, the jug passing around a couple of post-coital jays, it suddenly occurs to someone it might be fun to, like, jam?

Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeroes' look isn't far from that dream, but this is not to say their debut EP is sexual or slipshod. On *Up From Below* they make oversexed co-ed cathartic choral sing-alongs that call to mind the Arcade Fire and the Polyphonic Spree. Indeed these three songs are as infectious as either of those bands' most exuberant, ebullient efforts. And with a Southland attitude updating their more northerly predecessors' take on group-living style anthemic indie rock, it's the perfect summer soundtrack — for a lounging-poolside-at-your-Laurel-Canyon-home-circa-1968 kind of summer.

There's more than the specter of Phil Spector in the wall-of-sound toe-tappers "40 Day Dream" and "Janglin'," and certain undeniable throw-back qualities that will be traced to Sixties- and Seventies-era folk rock/psychedelia. What's refreshing is that the music doesn't seem aware of this reference. It just sorta hangs there, spread out on the couch like a contented houseguest. The soupy, thick songs are overpopulated with vocal ticks. Hoots, whistles, "yeah-yeahs" and "oo-ahs" are dispensed amid soaring strings, brass flourishes, and snare hits that slap and crash like the sea. It's a chorus of happy hippies stomping and laughing, singing, *one love/one touch/carries on* like they mean it. You almost believe it does. (Community Music/Fairfax Recordings)

— Richard Park

Gaucho

Deep Night

Everything old is new again (well, nearly everything) thanks to these savvy, intrepid local hepcats. Gaucho — no, not a Steely Dan cover combo — is a sextet consisting of acoustic guitarists David Ricketts and Michael Groh, accordionist Rob Reich, Ralph Carney on various wind instruments, bassist Ari Munkres, and drummer Pete Devine.

Deep Night is sixteen standards/chestnuts (mostly from the first half of the 20th century) played in the mode of Belgian Gypsy jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt's Hot Club de France and their disciples the Hot Club of Cowtown and Hot Club of San Francisco. You'll likely notice a common thread: *Hot* here denoting driving tempos, vigorous rhythms, invigorating swing, and sultry melodies. Along with an assortment of expressive clarinets, Carney blows scorching sax in the boldly big-hearted manner of pre-bebop players Coleman Hawkins and Johnny Hodges, and growling trumpet à la Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington's brass section. Think the accordion is for squares? Reich's squeezebox is the thick, tangy mayonnaise that offsets the cabrese generated by the rest. The guitarists — heck, the whole lot — play fabulously with not a single excess note.

This is jazz that wears its heart on its sleeve with plenty of Saturday savoir faire and swagger and straight from (and to) the heart of musicianship. In the a.m. or *Deep Night*, this'll chase the blues away posthaste. (Porto Franco Records)

— Mark Keresman

Gaucho performs at Amnesia (853 Valencia St., SF) every Wednesday, 8 p.m., free. AmnesiatheBar.com

Jennifer Lee

Quiet Joy

Bossa nova — the Brazilian blend that made significant inroads into American jazz and pop during the 1960s with its combination of the swing of jazz and the sway of samba — is back in vogue, as evidenced by recent Diana Krall and Eliane Elias recordings. On her second CD for San Diego guitarist Peter Sprague's SBE label, Oakland jazz vocalist Jennifer Lee applies her warmly inviting alto tones to a half-dozen bossa nova numbers, including the classics "O Barquinho" (Little Boat) and "O Pato" (The Duck). Lee uses Jon Hendricks' hip English lyrics on the latter and sings the self-penned title track wordlessly, but she renders the other four in lilting Portuguese. Her acoustic guitar chords add to the rhythm section on those selections. On many of the other songs she switches to piano or lays out instrumentally, letting Sprague, drummer Duncan Moore and alternating bassists Bruno Necak and Bob Magnusson drive such swinging tunes as "I Hear Music," "Pennies from Heaven," and the original "You Knew," which references Peet's on Piedmont Avenue.

The Belgrade-born Necak shows himself to be a rather original stylist, particularly when he scats along with several of his pizzicato bass solos, sort of like Slam Stewart without the bow. Peter Sprague plays some commanding guitar solos, both electric and acoustic, and his brother Tripp Sprague alternates between tenor saxophone and chromatic harmonica. His lyrical harmonica lines, which bring to mind both Stevie Wonder and Toots Thielemans, give additional gentleness to Lee's exquisitely tender reading of the Frank Churchill/Ned Washington lullaby "Baby Mine." (SBE Records)

— Lee Hildebrand

Jennifer Lee plays Yoshi's (510 Embarcadero West, Oakland) on Monday, June 1, 8 p.m. $12. Yoshis.com

Sleep Your Excellence

Sleep Your Excellence EP

This San Francisco group's debut brings bright ideas to a dark corner of the indie-rock universe. Opener "Life Inside a Scream" features a bassline straight from one of Joy Division's less somber moments beneath a distinctly hummable vocal melody. "My New Heaven" is the Cure meets Slowdive. Call them Interpol minus the long face. (self-released)

At Cafe du Nord (2170 Market St., San Francisco) on May 30, 8 p.m. $10-$20

Sila and the Afrofunk Experience

Black President

The front cover depicts Obama holding up the continent of Africa, in case we didn't get "black president." The music, however, is quite diplomatic: an international blend that's more Afrobeat than funk, with horn flourishes rather than poppin' basslines at the fore — nothing Victor Sila's occasional James Brown yelp would have it otherwise.

At Mezzanine (444 Jessie St., San Francisco) on May 30, 8 p.m. $15

David Landon Band

The Time

One might call this summertime blues — the sort of upbeat, R&B- and soul-inflected stuff crafted for dancing under the midday sun at a neighborhood street festival. Because it's not really blue at all. Singer Landon may lament about leaving a lover, but he's obviously already over it. The four-piece band is capable, cohesive, and — in the case of a few right-minded songs — a bit adventurous. (Whip Records)

At Lou's Pier 47 (300 Jefferson St., San Francisco) on June 2, 8 p.m. $5

Kush Arora

The Dread Bass Chronicles

East Bay native Kush Arora delivers an innovative dance album melding futuristic electronics with a variety of Indian and Jamaican dance styles. Six guest emcees ice Kush's cake, as in "Wine Me See You," where Bongo Chilli bathes dancehall vocals over a pure bhangra beat. (Kush Arora Productions)

At Club Six (60 6th St., San Francisco) on May 30, 8 p.m. $18

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CONCERTS & CLUBS

THURSDAY 28

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Diana Willis plus [illegible] 8 p.m. Ashkenaz. 8:30 pm, $13
Kaplegreen Freight & Salvage. 8 pm, $18.50-$19.50
R.I.S.K. 924 Gilman, 7:30 pm, $5-$10

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Jazz Band [illegible] Plaza, 6:30-8 pm, free
Larry Vuckovich's Trio Blues International Quartet Yoshi's. 8 & 10 pm, $16
Red Dottos The Alley, 8 pm, free

Rock & Pop

JL Stiles w/ the Blues Fools, Starry Plough, 8 pm, $8
Prince 3 a Jukebox featuring the [illegible] of 8 All, [illegible] Superfoss VT & DJ Prince J. Stork Club, 8 pm, $5
The [illegible] Productions Rudolph's, 10 pm, free
The Spermadics [illegible] Sports Bar, 10 pm, free

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Funk Nobility Orchestra Cafe Van Kleef, 8 pm, $5
Oakland The Arena Presents Future Sound System w/ Teeko & Max Kane, [illegible], D. Saurus, & [illegible]. Pressed 9 pm, $5
Speak the Wave [illegible]

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Calypso Night w/ [illegible] and Michael from [illegible]. Kingia Lounge, 8 pm, free

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Jenny Lewis The Fillmore, 8 pm, $25
King's Night all-star blues jam. Ship's Tavern, 9 & 11:30 pm, free
Shane Dwight Biscuits & Blues 8-11:30 pm, $15

Classical & Opera

San Francisco Symphony w/ [illegible], mezzo-soprano, performing works by Schubert & Berg. Davies Symphony Hall, 2 pm, $30-$130

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Memory Band featuring [illegible] & [illegible]. [illegible], 8 pm, $15

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Beach Blanket Babylon Club Fugazi, 8 pm, $25-$77
Battery Blues Top of the Bund 7:30-11:30 pm, $10

Rock & Pop

[illegible] original short films and music w/ Battery Stone. Hotel Utah, 8:30 pm, $7-$10
The High 330 Ritch, 10 pm, $8, under 21 $10
King Band & the [illegible] w/ Mark Sultan, Apache. Great American Music Hall, 8 pm, $15
Loquat w/ Voltec, Boston Somerset. Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $10
[illegible] w/ Hot Fog, guests. [illegible] Social Club 8 pm, $7
[illegible] w/ Happy Hollows, [illegible]. 8 pm, $7
Propagandhi w/ Bridge and Tunnel, [illegible]. Slim's, 8 pm, $16-$18
[illegible] w/ special guests. [illegible] Room. 9:30 pm, $12-$15

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] Yoshi's-San Francisco, 8 & 10 pm, $20-$30, kids' matinee $5

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

[illegible] w/ guests [illegible], & [illegible]. 8 pm, $7

FRIDAY 29

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Band & the Orchestra Jupiter, 8 pm, free
[illegible] w/ [illegible] Cafe 7:30 pm, free
Jon [illegible] Project La Peña Cultural Center 8 pm, $10-$12
Lisa Haley and the Zydekats plus Cajun dance lesson at 8:15 p.m. Eagles Hall, 8 pm, $15
[illegible] w/ [illegible]. Cafe Van Kleef 8:30 pm, $7

Classical & Opera

[illegible] Chamber Symphony performing [illegible] at the Door. Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 8 pm, $20-$30, seniors $7
Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra performing works by Handel w/ the Mark Morris Dance Group. Zellerbach Hall, 8 pm, $36-$82
[illegible] performing [illegible]. Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, 8 pm, $15, seniors $10, students/children $5

Experimental & Avant-Garde

[illegible], featuring the [illegible] of What You Know. [illegible] 53 Theater 8 pm, $10-$12

Gospel & Vocal

[illegible] performing [illegible] by Vaughan Williams, [illegible]. St. [illegible] Episcopal Church. 8 pm, $10-$20

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

The P-Pi Rudolph's, 10 pm, free
Red Dottos The Alley, 8 pm, free
Stephanie [illegible] [illegible], 8 pm, $15
Swingthing [illegible] at 8 p.m. Ashkenaz, 8 pm, $13, students $10

Rock & Pop

7 Generations w/ [illegible], Crushed on You, Run with the Hunted, [illegible]. 924 Gilman, 8 pm, $8
[illegible] w/ [illegible] Fall, the Muscles. Starry Plough, 8:30 pm, $10
The [illegible] w/ the Rooster, [illegible]. Stork Club, 9 pm, $5
John [illegible] acoustic, plus guests. Mile High Club, 9:30 pm, $7
Mystic Rage w/ A Place to Call Home, [illegible]. 8 pm, TBA
Tomorrow's Bad Seeds [illegible], 8:30 pm, $8-$10

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Joey Kennedy [illegible]. 7:30 pm, free

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Francisco Perez's Birthday Celebration open dance floor [illegible], 8 & 10 pm $20
Soul of [illegible] live flamenco guitar. [illegible] 7:30 pm, free
[illegible] [illegible] 8 pm, $20-$25
[illegible] w/ [illegible] Wavy Gravy. Freight & Salvage 8 pm, $18.50-$19.50

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Jenny Lewis The Fillmore, 8 pm, $25
Longhorne Slim w/ [illegible] & the Midnight [illegible] & Sam Lowry. The Independent, 8 pm, $15
Red Planet & the Mighty Flyers Biscuits & Blues 8 & 10 pm, $22
[illegible] [illegible] Cafe 8 pm, free

Classical & Opera

San Francisco Symphony w/ [illegible], mezzo-soprano, performing works by Schubert & Berg. Davies Symphony Hall, 8:30 pm, $30-$130

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Beach Blanket Babylon Club Fugazi, 8 pm, $25-$77
Sacred Spirit: Roy Hargrove & [illegible], Carter Grace Cathedral, 8 pm, $25-$40

Rock & Pop

[illegible] w/ [illegible]. [illegible], 6-8 pm, free
[illegible] w/ [illegible]. Cafe du Nord, 9:30 pm, $20
[illegible] w/ [illegible]. [illegible], Bottom of the Hill 8 pm, $10
The Pack A.D. w/ [illegible], and the [illegible]. 8 pm, $8
[illegible] w/ [illegible], the Undertaker and His Pals. Amnesia Social Club, 8 pm, $8
[illegible] w/ [illegible]. 9 pm, $7
[illegible] [illegible] Lounge, 8 pm, $10
[illegible] w/ [illegible] American Music Hall, 8 pm, $25-$30
[illegible] w/ [illegible]. 8 pm, $7
[illegible] w/ [illegible]. 8 pm, $7
[illegible] The Complete [illegible] Experience w/ the [illegible], the 65's, [illegible]. 8 pm, $15

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 & 10 pm, $28-$30, kids' [illegible] $5

SATURDAY 30

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] featuring East Bay Singers and [illegible] Society. Cal State East Bay [illegible] Building, 8 pm, $15-$7
[illegible] Everett & Jones Barbeque. 8 pm, free
[illegible] [illegible] Cafe 7:30 pm, $10, kids $5
[illegible] w/ [illegible]. Nomad Cafe, 7:30 pm, free
[illegible] w/ [illegible]. Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $18.50-$19.50
[illegible] Saddle Rack, 7:15 pm, $5

Classical & Opera

[illegible] Baroque Orchestra performing works by Handel w/ the Mark Morris Dance Group. Zellerbach Hall, 8 pm, $36-$82

Experimental & Avant-Garde

[illegible] featuring [illegible], Wayne Grim, & Cheryl E. Leonard. [illegible] Park, 7-9:30 pm, free

Gospel & Vocal

[illegible] performing songs from Broadway. Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, 7:30 pm, $30, seniors $25
[illegible] "The Good [illegible]" w/ [illegible]. St. Mark's Episcopal Church 8 pm, $10-$25

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Frisky Frolics [illegible], 8 pm, free

PICKS

Riverboat Gamblers

MonoMono Benefit

Thirty-some years ago, a group of influential African musicians settled in the East Bay and put together three bands that started the world beat movement. Joni Haastrup played with Ginger Baker's Air Force in the early 1970s and went on to form **MonoMono**, one of the first Afrobeat bands. When he moved to Oakland he put together a new version of MonoMono, which became a proving ground for many of the musicians who created the world beat scene. Ken Okulolo played bass with Sunny Adé's African Beats, and after settling in Oakland he put together **Kotoja**, which is still a vital part of the local African music scene. **C.K. Ladzekpo's** African drumming classes at UC Berkeley introduced hundreds of local musicians to West African rhythms, and his **African Music & Dance Ensemble** remains a cornerstone of the local African community. A benefit concert to raise money for MonoMono's new CD features all three bands at Ashkenaz (1317 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley) on Saturday, May 30. 8:30 p.m., $15, $12 for students. Ashkenaz.com — *j. poet*

Riverboat Gamblers

Despite getting their start shortly after Eleven Tsuan and proggy emo [illegible] At the Drive-In, **Riverboat Gamblers** always preferred an old-school approach to punk that would undoubtedly get nods of approval from the band's heroes in the Clash and Rocket From the Crypt. As a result, the Gamblers have earned themselves a reputation for having one of the [illegible] shows around [illegible] that Rancid has picked [illegible] for its forthcoming [illegible]. In the meantime, Riverboat Gamblers will be singing about drinking and gambling, cherry-picking from all its new [illegible] *Underneath the Owl* and hearing front man Mike Wiebe [illegible] ways of kilieuru, physical harm on his person at **the Independent** (628 Divisadero St., San Francisco) on Sunday, May 31. 9 p.m. $12. TheIndependentSF.com — *Dave Gil de Rubio*

Stephanie Crawford

Mix a little Billie Holiday with a little Carmen McRae and you get San Francisco vocalist **Stephanie Crawford**, the 1993 winner of France's Django d'Or award. Crawford had an illustrious career in New York prior to her six-year sojourn in Paris (she had professorships at Centre d'Informations Musicales and Institute d'Art, Culture et Perception from 1989-96). She's known for phrasing lyrics in such a sincere, unfiltered way that every song becomes her own story. Moreover, Crawford's voice is simply wonderful: sweet, pliant, and just a little sad, recalling balladeers of the bebop era. She doesn't [illegible] interpret music, she inhabits it. Stephanie Crawford performs on Friday, May 29 at Berkeley's **Jazzschool** (2087 Addison St., 8 p.m., $15), and Sunday, May 31 at **Nomad Cafe** (6500 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley; 11 a.m.-1 p.m., free). StephanieCrawfordJazz.com — *Rachel Swan*

Bertrand Cuiller

MusicSources, Berkeley's homey center for period performance, presents the West Coast debut of French harpsichordist **Bertrand Cuiller**. The 3_-year-old artist, who won third place in the Bruges International Harpsichord Competition in 1998, has since received the Diapason d'Or, Choc du Monde de la Musique, *Joker de Crescendo*, 5 de Classica, and the Coup de Coeur de *l'Académie Charles Cros* awards for his CD of solo harpsichord music by Byrd, Philips, and Bull. It is selections from that recording that he performs in the one-hour concert, which is followed by their customary food and wine reception. At **MusicSources** (1000 The Alameda, Berkeley) on Sunday, May 31. 5 p.m., $15, 20. MusicSources.org or 510-528-1685. — *Jason Victor Serinus*

George Cotsirilos Jazz Trio Albatross Pub, 9:30 pm, $3

Laurie Antonioli: American Dreams Jazzschool, 8 pm, $18

Silky Sandy Dreams Jupiter, 8 pm, free

Bbe Gnaws The Alley, 8 pm, free

Rock & Pop

Dirty Granny w/ special guests, Grand on Telegraph, 9 pm, $10-$12

Eric McFadden Trio Cafe Van Kleef, 9 pm, $5

Oil Tanks and the Attractors Eastbell's, 11 pm, free

Granu Drew w/ In the Dust, Bigbow's Two Boots, & Rude Intrusion, Stork Club, 8:30 pm, $8

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Gnawa Folk Entertainment Kimball's Carnival, 8 pm, free

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

91.3 KISS FM the Street Profile featuring Yaa Brenton Wood, Lakeside, Timex & al Chicano, Albatross Amphitheatre, 5 pm, $10-$50.50

Armando Peraza Birthday Celebration open Ashkenaz, Yoshi's, 2 & 10 pm, $6.5

Oh Joseph Magic Pa Roots y Dollar Afro-Peruvian music and dance, La Peña Cultural Center, 8 pm, $14-$15

The New Gemmilions w/ Baba Nan & Kehaya, Oli Lattelope's African Music & Dance Ensemble, Ashkenaz, 8 pm, $15, students $12

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Dan Shinkler Joseph & Ashes & 8 & 10 pm, $22

"Dream Over Around the World" w/ Bay Area Roots Harp Ensemble, Sollaila, & Tami Hartwell, St. Mary's Cathedral, 3 pm, $10-$45 donation

Gospel & Vocal

Artists: Voces Entwilles performing music by Vaughan Williams, Poulenc, Tomkins, Sefan, & more, St. Ignatius Church, 8 pm, $10-$20

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Beach Blanket Babylon Club Fugazi, 7 & 10 pm, $25-$77

Rock & Pop

Asian Rock Fest 2009 featuring Bunnny, Bee Project, Johnny Hi-Fi, Zumpla, & Emeald Fight Stem's & pm, $13-$15

Ashes Joseph w/ Woven, Stemy Strong, Warlock Tavern, 1:30 pm, $7

Dank & Ben Happy Hour Show w/ local dozens, Thee Parkside, 3-8 pm, free

Stepdaw w/ Bear Kit, Ashes Café, 10 pm, $8

Nail Ashes w/ Scarecrow, DeSanto, & Bank, Anna's Social Club, 8 pm, $18

Hot Challenge w/ Animations, Collage Comet & Deep Sea Conference, Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $10-$20

Jerry Joseph and the Jackmormons two sets, plus guest, Final Ulah, 8 pm, $18

Moe. The Fillmore, 9 pm, $27.50

Bay Shinkler w/ 77 Straight, Shinkler Niner's, 9 pm, $6

The Thermals w/ The Shaky Gunne guests, Bottom of the Hill, 10 pm, $15

Youth Ramallites w/ Sterling Says, Parsel Dreams & Exeted Gnaws, Red Devil Lounge, 1 pm, $6-$8

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Antimbit Ban featuring F.A.M.E., Thanks One, One Man Jazz, & host A-Ron, Blue Room, 10 pm, $5-$10

Amel Larrieux Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 & 10 pm, $28-$30; Yoshi's Dreams, 36

The Roots Davies Symphony Hall, 8 pm, $25-$90

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

Tila and the Afrotron Experience OD Dreams w/ Fiel's Gold, Boogaly Umbrella, Mezzanine, 1 pm, $15

SUNDAY 31

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Amoeba's Unplugged w/ rotating artists.

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THU MAY 28 2009
THE THRILL OF IT ALL (X-TOKYO DECADENCE)/GENLDICK/ SUPERFINOS VT

FRI MAY 29 2009
CREEPSHOW PRESENTS:
THE BUG NASTIES/ THE REACTION/ BORSTAL HOLIDAY

SAT MAY 30 2009
FRENCHIE PRESENTS.
RUDE INTOXICANT/BIGELOW'S TREEHOUSE/IN THE DUST/MAMA C

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WED 5/27 8:00 pm $[illegible] — SQUARE DANCE "HOEDOWN THROWDOWN" calling by EVA LADEN music by THE BRAINSTORMERS

THU 5/28 8:30 pm $12 — "STOMPING THE BLUES" CRICK WILLIS WITH THE HELLCATS 8:00 pm Blues dance lesson with Ph Sy Carrasco

FRI 5/29 9:00 pm $13 $11 Member — EAST & WEST COAST SWING SWINGTHING 8:00 pm swing dance lesson with Karen & Michael

SAT 5/30 9:00 pm $15 $12 Member — AFROFUNK EXPLOSION! JONI HAASTRUP & THE NEW MONOMONO BABA KED & KOTOJA CK LADZEKPO'S AFRICAN MUSIC & DANCE ENSEMBLE

SUN 5/31 3:00 pm $6 adults / $4 kids — "SILLY SUNDAYS" KIDS' SHOW THE SIPPY CUPS Imaginative pop fantasy, by the early '70s that's rich, funny, intelligent, and surprising!

SUN 5/31 7:00 pm $15-$20 sliding scale / $10 students — BENEFIT ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND & RHYTHM BOUND R&B BAND to support the Albany Music Fund

TUE 6/2 8:00 pm $10 — ZYDECO MOTORDUDE ZYDECO 8:00 pm Cajun/Zydeco dance lesson

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SAT. 30TH: DJ PLATURN HIP HOP, BREAKS, CLASSICS

SUN. 1ST: "KING OF KING'S SEVEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION" REFIX W/ JAH WARRIOR SHELTER, SMOKE ONE & MORE! ROOTS, REGGAE, DANCEHALL

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C&C

Jupiter, 5 pm, free
[illegible] Parker w/ [illegible] Freight & Salvage, 4 pm, $24.50-$25.50
Traditional Irish Music with [illegible] Starry Plough, 4 pm, sliding scale

Classical & Opera

Baroque Dances with harpsichord, Music Sources, 5 pm, $20, seniors/students $15
Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra Berkeley sing works by Handel, w/ the Mark Morris Dance Group, Zellerbach Hall, 3 pm, $30-$92

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

3rd Annual Middle School Invitational Jazzschool, 4:30 pm, $5, students free
A Jazz Blast w/ Charles Hamilton & Friends, Paul Hutch, [illegible] & Tommy, Live Oak Theatre, 3 pm, $5
Albany High School Jazz Band & Rhythm Bound R&B Band Ashkenaz, 7 pm, $15-$20, students $10
[illegible] Yoshi's, 2 & 7 pm, $18-$26, kids' matinee $5
Jim [illegible] Jazz Quartet classic & contemporary jazz, Coffee Mill, 3-6 pm, free
[illegible] Jazz [illegible] Waterfront [illegible], 5 pm, $40
Rhythm Doctors [illegible], Peter's Pasta, 5 pm, free
Soul Jazz Sundays featuring the [illegible] Wiley Organ trio, Aqua Lounge, 5 pm, $5 donation
[illegible] Trio [illegible] Cafe, 11 am-1 pm, free
Sunday Swing & Jam Anna's Jazz Island, 3 pm, $5
[illegible] Jazz Island, 5:30-8 pm, free

Rock & Pop

[illegible] Silver Shield, 6-10 pm, free
The Sippy Cups "Silly Sundays" kids' show, Ashkenaz, 3-4:30 pm, $6, kids $4
Sunday BBQ w/ Vitamin Party, Craftmatic Adjustibles, Collisionville & Bwuh, Stork Club, 3 pm, $6

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] Jim the Intelligent, [illegible] Geoffrey's, 4 pm, $[illegible]

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

Cafe Rumba Afro-Cuban rumba percussion & [illegible] party, Cafe Valparaiso, 3:30-6 pm, free
Orchestra Night w/ [illegible] Cafe [illegible], 6-8 pm, free

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] & the Low Room w/ Val [illegible] & [illegible] [illegible] Tavern, 4 pm, $8
Shelley Short/[illegible]/Lily Taylor [illegible] Cafe, 5 pm, free
Jim [illegible] Family Orchestra group sing-along w/ guest vocalists, Make-Out Room, 6 pm, $7

Classical & Opera

SFS Chamber Music w/ San Francisco Symphony musicians performing works by Mozart, Saint-Saëns, Christopher Rouse & Prokofiev, [illegible] Symphony Hall, 2 pm, $31

Gospel & Vocal

[illegible] "The Road Home" w/ [illegible] St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 4 pm, $15-$25

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Beach Blanket Babylon Club Fugazi, 2 & 5 pm, $25-$77
[illegible] Tango Jazz Ensemble [illegible] 2 pm, $15

Rock & Pop

[illegible] two sets, plus guest, Hotel Utah, 8 pm, $10
Moe. The Fillmore, 9 pm, $27.50
[illegible] w/ Bright Brown, [illegible] & [illegible], Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $10
[illegible] The Independent, 8 pm, $12
The Weekend w/ the [illegible] Bottom of the Hill, 9 pm, $10
The Wooden Birds w/ the Old-Fashioned Way, [illegible], 8 pm, $10-$12

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] Yoshi's San Francisco, 2 & 7 pm, $24-$30, kids' matinee $5

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] Orchestra [illegible], 8:30 pm, $10
"Salsa Sundays" El Rio, 3 pm, $8

MONDAY 1

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Irish Dance and Vocal Starry Plough, 7 pm, free

Gospel & Vocal

Berkeley High Singers featuring the BHS Chorus Club, Florence Schwimley [illegible]

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[illegible] 2455 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-549-[illegible]
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[illegible] Hopyard, Pleasanton, 925-[illegible]
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[illegible] Arts 1801 Lincoln St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]
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[illegible] 1001 B St., Hayward, 510-[illegible]
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Blake's on Telegraph (Upstairs) 2367 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-848-0886
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[illegible] 422 3rd St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]
[illegible] 125 12th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]
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[illegible] 809 Ferry St., Martinez, 925-[illegible]
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[illegible] Irish Sports Bar 1524 Civic Dr, Walnut Creek, 925-932-1331
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Jewish Community Center of the East Bay 1414 Walnut St., Berkeley, 510-84[illegible]
[illegible] 1225 Park St., Alameda 510-[illegible]
Jupiter 2181 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley 510-843-8277
[illegible] 1400 [illegible] St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]
[illegible] 522 2nd St., Oakland, 510-444-[illegible]
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[illegible] 3553 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-284-4817
Ruby Room 132 14th St., Oakland 510-444-7224
Saddle Rack 42011 Boscell Rd., Fremont, 510-979-0477
Shattuck Down Low 2284 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley 510-548-1159
[illegible] 3400 San Ramon Valley Blvd. Ste 371, San Ramon
[illegible] 2426 Lincoln Ave., Berkeley 510-[illegible]
St. Mark's Episcopal Church 2300 Bancroft Way, Berkeley 510-848-5107
St. John's Presbyterian Church 2727 College Ave., Berkeley 510-845-6830
Starry Plough 3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley 510-841-2082
Stork Club 2330 Telegraph Ave., Oakland 510-444-6174
Sweet Fingers 1494 E. 14th St., San Leandro 510-553-0088
[illegible] 1928 Telegraph Ave., Oakland 510-451-8100
Velvet 3411 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland 510-531-3321
The Vibe Lounge 2272 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland 510-451-[illegible]
Vinnie's Bar & Grill 2045 Mt. Diablo St., Concord 925-685-9515
Wente Vineyards Restaurant 5050 Arroyo Rd., Livermore 925-456-2450
Wheeler Auditorium UC Berkeley, Berkeley, 510-642-4298
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ART BRUT
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FRIDAY · JUNE 26 · 6PM
MAJOR LAZER

@ BERKELEY:

SATURDAY · JUNE 6 · 6PM
AMOEBA HOME GROWN & THE BERKELEY WORLD MUSIC FESTIVAL PRESENTS:
MOH ALILECHE
[illegible]

SPECIAL EVENT!
Amoeba Music Sponsors...
6TH ANNUAL BERKELEY WORLD MUSIC FESTIVAL
All over Telegraph Avenue
Saturday, June 6th: Noon - 9 pm, FREE
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6th Annual

Berkeley World Music Festival

Sat June 6th Noon - 9 pm

Telegraph Avenue
continuous music outdoors & in cafés

In People's Park
1:00 - 5:30 pm

Amoeba Music Presents

Stephen Kent
• MC & Didjeridu

Thomas Mapfumo
& The Blacks Unlimited
• Zimbabwe Chimurenga
& Afro-pop

Markus James & the Wassonrai
• Mali meets Mississippi Blues

Julia Chigamba
& the Chinyakare Ensemble
• Zimbabwe Dance Traditions

Freddy's Clarke's Wobbly World
• World Fusion

• Crafts Bazaar

In Telegraph Ave. Venues

Sukhawat Ali Khan
• Classic & Qawwali Sufi

Moh Alileche
• No African Amazigh (Berber)

Doctor Loco • Tex-Mex

Tom Chandler Trio • Bossa Nova

Black Olive Babes
• Balkan – Romani (Gypsy) Sephardic

Trio Amore • Italian Neapolitan & Opera

Michael Masley • Bowhammer Cymbalom

Lisa Sang to Moskow • Indian Sarode & Vocals

Hélène Attia Band • Mediterranean World – Jazz

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berkeley poetry festival
at Cody's corner 1 - 4 pm
[illegible] & Featured Readers

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EastBayExpress.com/Newsletters

Theater 1 pm. $10. Records 95

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Records Lee Yoshi's, 5 pm. $12. kids $6

"Uptown Rodeo Hubba" Uptown. 8 pm. $5

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

[illegible] Caffe [illegible]. 7 pm. free

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

The [illegible] Boys and Mission w/ Gayle Lynn and the Hand Hands. Amnesia. 8:30 pm. free

Jens Lekman w/ comedian Tig Notaro. Bottom of the Hill. 8 pm. $15

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Records City featuring Dave Mihaly & Ralph Carney, plus Marie Abe, Beau Boyce, John Heidt & Lisa Mezzacappa. Make-Out Room. 8 pm. free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Axel Big Band w/ Henry Washington. Jazz at Pearl's. 8 & 10 pm. $10-$18

Joe [illegible] Western Bay Area Brass All-Stars Yoshi's San Francisco. 8 pm. $18

Rock & Pop

Bands w/ Sorrican the Squid. Elbo Room. 9 pm. $5

Records Memory w/ Bryan Greenberg. Cafe du Nord. 8 pm. $12

TUESDAY 2

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

California Honeydrops [illegible] Place. noon. free

Country Western [illegible] Night w/ Theatre Vanity's Bar & Grill. 7:30-11 pm. free

Rocks Lagn Yoshi's. 8 & 10 pm. $10-$18

Experimental & Avant-Garde

SpaceFest 2500 featuring Lost Reason w/ Fred Frith, Jason Hoopes, & Got Rocks. Studio 1800. 8 pm. $5-$10

Gospel & Vocal

Boss Harmony Demos Lake [illegible] Methodist Church. 7:30 pm. $12

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Mission [illegible] & [illegible] Trade Anthony Caden's Nest. 7-9 pm. free

Jazzschool Tuesdays Beebe. 8 pm. free

Los [illegible] Caffe Eduoro. 7-9 pm. free

Jazzschool Uptown. Jazz Cajun/Zydeco dance lesson at 7:30 p.m. Ashkenaz. 8:30 pm. $10

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Trio [illegible] y Los Jupiter's Coffee & Tea Garden. 7-9 pm. free

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Jens Lekman w/ comedian Tig Notaro. Bottom of the Hill. 9 pm. $15

Last of the Blacksmiths w/ Telegraph Canyon, Marchelle Phoenix. Hotel Utah. 8 pm. $8

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Herb Alpert & Lani Hall Yoshi's San Francisco. 8 pm. $30

Rock & Pop

Forever Room w/ the Poison Tree Heads. Cafe du Nord. 8 pm. $8

Team Handsome The Fillmore. 8 pm. $32 *40

I Dur Rooks In LA w/ the Phonebooth Herbtank Lovers. 8 pm. $6

Western w/ Suicide Bomb, Poison Mission. The Knockout. 10 pm. free

Rock-Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

D U Noel Weekend w/ Brooklyn Mon Geet. Elbo Room. 9 pm. $6

Last Night Live Tuesdays Yoshi's San Francisco. 9:30 pm & late. $5

WEDNESDAY 3

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Room Mission Freight & Salvage. 8 pm. $18.50-$19.50

Whiskey Brothers Albatross Pub. 9 pm. free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Kelly Park Trio Anna's Jazz Room. 8 pm. $10

Red Lemon dinner jazz w/ guest Mason singers. The Alley. 8 pm. free

Willie Jones III Quartet Yoshi's. 8 & 10 pm. $16-$18

Rock & Pop

The Rocks w/ Records and the Poms. Stork Club. 9 pm. $6

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Orb Iglesias Malcalvo Arts Center. 8 pm. $10-$15

Tuda plus Rumor Jazz Rooks at 1:30 pm. Ashkenaz. 8:30 pm. $12

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Mission Rooks w/ Conspiracy of Venus, Beveronade. Rickshaw Stop. 8 pm. $10

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Herb Alpert & Lani Hall Yoshi's San Francisco. 8 pm. $35

Rock & Pop

Butterfly Boucher Elbo Room. 8 pm. $8

Dissolved w/ Big Blue Blimp. Mission [illegible] 5 pm. $8

Little Joy The Independent. 8 pm. $15

Mayhem w/ Marduk, Cephalic Carnage, [illegible] Decapitation, Withered & [illegible] Metal. [illegible] Lounge. 8 pm. $25-$30

Swing Out Sister Bimbo's 365 Club. 8 pm. $34

Weinland Cafe du Nord. 8:30 pm. $10 ●

CLUB DIRECTORY

SAN FRANCISCO

330 Ritch 330 Ritch St., 415-541-9574

[illegible] 1806 Haight St. 415-831-1200

Annie's Social Club 917 Folsom St. 415-974-1585

[illegible] 1601 Bush St., 415-771-1188

[illegible] 1 [illegible] Pl. 415-392-8180

[illegible] 448 Brannan St. 415-904-4100

[illegible] 5027 California St., 415-831-5620

[illegible] 1025 Columbus Ave., 415-474-0365

[illegible] 550 Barneveld St. 415-586-3733

[illegible] 471 [illegible] St. 415-292-2583

[illegible] 1233 17th St., 415-861-4455

[illegible] 2389 Mission St. 415-643-5300

[illegible] 2170 [illegible] St., 415-861-5016

[illegible] 568 Haight St., 415-558-1131

[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible] 2886

[illegible] 1190 Folsom St. 415-431-3332

The Cellar 685 Sutter St., 415-441-5678

[illegible] 265 9th St., 415-289-0850

Club [illegible] 878 Green St., 415-835-4222

Club Six 60 6th St., 415-863-1221

[illegible] Theatre [illegible] Blvd., Fort Mason Center 415-345-7575

[illegible] 201 Van Ness Ave 415-864-6000

[illegible] 2801 Leavenworth St., 415-775-5110

DNA Lounge 375 11th St., 415-626-1409

Dogpatch Saloon 2496 3rd St., 415-643-8592

the Eagle Tavern 398 12th St., 415-626-0880

Edinburgh Castle 950 Geary St. 415-885-4074

El [illegible] 2700 16th St., 415-437-9040

El Rio 3158 Mission St. 415-282-3325

Elbo Room 647 Valencia St., 415-552-7788

[illegible] Lounge 1568 Geary St., 415-811-1362

[illegible] 416 5th St., 415-648-0000

The Fillmore 1805 Geary Blvd. 415-346-6000

Glas Kat 520 4th St., 415-495-6620

The [illegible] 1500 Van Ness Ave 415-673-8[illegible]

Great American Music Hall 859 O'Farrell St. 415-885-0750

Hemlock Tavern 1131 Polk St., 415-923-0923

[illegible] 491 Van Ness Ave. 415-332-6470

Hotel Utah 500 4th St. 415-546-6300

The Independent 628 Divisadero St., 415-771-1421

Ireland's 32 3920 Geary Blvd. 415-386-6173

Jazz at Pearl's 256 Columbus Ave., 415-291-8255

Johnny Foley's Irish House 243 O'Farrell St., 415-954-0777

The Knockout 3223 Mission St., 415-550-6994

[illegible] Lounge 1110 Mission St., 415-864-5585

Madrone Lounge 500 Divisadero St., 415-241-0202

Make-Out Room 3225 22nd St., 415-647-2888

Mezzanine 444 Jessie St., 415-625-8880

[illegible] [illegible] Ave., 415-664-2044

[illegible] 1001 [illegible] St., 415-454-5238

Park Chalet Brewery 1000 Great Highway, 415-386-8439

[illegible] 1[illegible] St., 415-648-0918

Pier 23 The Embarcadero, 415-260-7384

Red Devil Lounge 1695 Polk St. 415-921-1695

Rickshaw Stop 155 Fell St. 415-861-2011

Rite Spot Cafe 2099 Folsom St., 415-552-6066

Rockit Room 406 Clement St., 415-387-6343

[illegible] Room 222 [illegible] St.

San Francisco Conservatory of Music 50 Oak St. 415-503-6215

[illegible] 453 [illegible] Ave. 415-297-3488

[illegible] 3089 16th St., 415-621-9004

Slim's 333 11th St., 415-522-0333

Space 550 550 Barneveld Ave., 415-550-8286

[illegible] 399 9th St., 415-863-6606

[illegible] Gallery 2565 Mission St., 415-255-7227

Supperclub 657 Harrison St., 415-348-0900

Swig Bar 561 Geary St. 415-931-7292

[illegible] 540 [illegible] St.

Three Parkside 1600 17th St., 415-503-0393

Top of the Mark 1 Nob Hill, 999 California St. 415-616-6916

Tunnel Top 601 Bush St., 415-986-8900

[illegible] Lounge 443 Broadway St., 415-714-0278

The Warfield 982 Market St., 415-775-7722

Yoshi's San Francisco 1330 Fillmore St. 415-655-5600

AUG 7, 2009 — OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CA — EAST BAY EXPRESS
5-MIDNIGHT — ALL AGES — FREE ADMISSION

BEST OF THE EAST BAY
BAND SPOTLIGHT

PERFORMING ON THE MAIN STAGE:

SUPERFINOS VTO

RELEASES:
"Tinman's Last Request" EP (2009)

BAND MEMBERS:
Kamal Hasan Hood (Guitars / Vocals)
Paul Dean Price III (Bass / Vocals)
Hasan Lengel (Drums)

BAND BIO:

Superfinos VTO is a band formed pursuing music as life, changing the world, and crafting tunes in the true nature of rock & roll. After a two year sabbatical from performing member Kamal Hasan Hood (guits/vox) began playing demos to long time friend and coworker Paul Dean Price III (bass/vox). Paul responded with demo music of his own and a band immediately formed. Each artist wrote to the others music adding their own element, trading lead vocals and adding harmonies. The search for a drummer ended quickly when hard hitting Hasan Lengel (a long time friend and former band mate of Paul) joined the band as the first and only drummer of the group. The group immediately began rehearsing the demo material and writing new tunes.

The group's ambition cannot be outshined. They focus on solid songwriting as a true path to success, strive for originality through authenticity, and seek to revive a freshness in rock music long ignored by both indie and pop genres. Fans and critics alike describe the music as original, artistic, passionate and playful... rock & roll as raw and kinky as it is heartfelt and complex.

Superfinos VTO's music steers rock aesthetic while never sacrificing originality. In just over 2 years the band has amassed a solid fan base and played at premier venues in the Bay Area and SoCal. Although more than happy to rock a house party, Superfinos VTO is ready to take the world head on.

WEBSITE: SUPERFINOSVTO.COM CONTACT: BAND@SUPERFINOSVTO.COM

[illegible]
Oakland

Wednesdays!
Brain Damage:
Drinkin' Music with
Your host King Davey
and DJ Hicksmokey!

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Saturday and Sunday
all you can eat waffles $7!

Happy Hour 4 until 8
$1.50 Pabst on tap!

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FOXES
Enjoy Tusker Beer!
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Slippery Wet Wednesday
Open Mic & Poetry • No Cover

Thursday
Face Value Productions
Old Skool R&B HipHop • Ladies Night
Drink Discount, Free Pool for Ladies
$5 Cover 10pm - 1:30am

Friday
DJ SupaK
R&B HipHop • $5 Cover 10pm - 1:30am

Saturday
AD Productions w/ Hoodstyle DJ's
$5 Cover 10pm - 1:30am

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Top 100 Bay Area Restaurants 2009 and Top 10 New Restaurants in 2008 –San Francisco Chronicle

tonight! Wed May 27
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this weekend! Thurs Fri Sat Sun
May 28 29 30 31
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JAZ SAWYER PRESENTS
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Fri, Sat, Sun, June 5 6, 7
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(Solo Piano)

Yoshi's Exclusive! Mon Tues Wed June 8, 9 10
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BOBBY HUTCHERSON
& GEORGE CABLES
"Three Friends"

Thurs, June 11
The Brooklyn Circus Presents
RYAN LESLIE

Yoshi's Exclusive! Fri, Sat, Sun, June 12 13 14
CHARLIE HADEN
GONZALO RUBALCABA
& LEE KONITZ

'We Got The Funk' Series
Mon June 15
PUNK FUNK MOB

Tues June 16
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Late Night Live! Every Tuesday
[illegible]

tonight! Wed May 27
Cape Verdean Chanteuse
MARIA DE BARROS

tomorrow! Thurs May 28
LARRY VUCKOVICH'S
EURO TRASH
INTERNATIONAL QUARTET
with special guest vocalist
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this weekend! Fri Sat May 29 30
Open Dance Floor!
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All shows are all ages. [illegible]
Open for dinner nightly at both locations. [illegible]
Gibson

DJ & DANCE

THURSDAY 28

EAST BAY

The Big Man of the Room, DJ Gary B spins house & disco music. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 10 pm. free

Lounge Night w/ DJ and VJ Joe G. spinning hip-hop, R&B, dancehall, & Top 40. White Horse Inn. 9 pm. $3 students. [illegible]

Lounge Night DJ Solard spins hip-hop, club hits, & Top 40 for college students, only 18 required. [illegible] on Telegraph. 9:30 pm. $6-$10 sliding scale

DJ Adds spinning [illegible]. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

DJ Room, [illegible]. 9 pm. free

Happy Hour w/ DJ Dameon spinning reggae, African, salsa, roots, Brazilian, boogie, disco, & funk. Ruby's. 7 pm. free

Boston Holding w/ [illegible]. 9 pm. $5

Tasty ladies night w/ DJ [illegible] spinning hip-hop & R&B. Bench & Bar. 9 pm. $12

Thursday Throwdown w/ DJ Rex the Vinyl Archaeologist and guests spinning hip-hop classics, '80s, Rock Steady, Room, [illegible], funk, & soul. Shattuck Down Low. 9 pm. free

SAN FRANCISCO

Afrofiction w/ [illegible] & guests spinning Afro-Latin funk. [illegible]. 10 pm. $8

The Prodigy The Warfield. 8 pm. $38-$42

Tips w/ [illegible]. The Independent. 9 pm. $10

Vest [illegible] Lounge. 9 pm. $20

FRIDAY 29

EAST BAY

Sabbat w/ the Raydens, Wild Youth, & Little Red [illegible]. 9 pm. free

Latin Explosion DJ [illegible] spins cumbia, salsa, merengue, [illegible] Spanish pop, & house. Bench & Bar. 9 pm. $12

Room, Sunday Lounge DJ [illegible] spinning Cuban music & Latin jazz. La Pena [illegible] Cafe. 10:30 pm. free

Outcastic DJ [illegible] spins funk, Latin, & dub. [illegible] Lounge. 10 pm. free

Retro-Active [illegible] '80s pop night. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

Sultry Fridays DJ Latin & Fat Rich spin R&B & soul. [illegible]. 9 pm. $6

SAN FRANCISCO

Gnarmageddon w/ DJs [illegible] & Club [illegible] spinning [illegible] hip-hop, new wave, [illegible], & pop. Mezzanine. 9 pm. $5

Gnarl benefit for [illegible] w/ [illegible], Sid Gee, [illegible], & more. Paradise Lounge. 9:30 pm. $8-$15

SATURDAY 30

EAST BAY

Club Maxwell's DJs Jerry Blak & Soul Profete spin R&B, funk, [illegible], reggae, & hip-hop. Maxwell's Lounge. 9 pm. $20

Country Saturdays [illegible] & house at midnight. Club 1220. 8:30 pm-midnight. $5

Magic Club Crates DJ [illegible] & guests host genre-bending extravaganza. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

SAN FRANCISCO

Danjer's 40th Birthday w/ A [illegible] Tommy, [illegible] & Room. Rainbow Shop. 8:30 pm. free

El Superritmo! w/ [illegible] & Reggie [illegible] spinning cumbias, reggaeton, salsa, sonideros, and world dance-pop. Milk. [illegible] Room. 10 pm. $5

Pop Bitch new wave, punk, electro, goth, & more. [illegible] Lounge. 9 pm. $6

Pretty Lights w/ [illegible], [illegible] guests. The Independent. 9 pm. $15-$17

SUNDAY 31

EAST BAY

DJ Oratus spinning roots, eclectic & dance-hall [illegible]. Club Room. 9:30 pm. $5

Speakeasy Sundays DJ [illegible] spinning funk, big band, jump blues, & more. Easy Lounge. 8 pm. free

More Listings Online
Get info about hundreds of musical events at EastBayExpress.com or m.EastBayExpress.com

Grooves on a Sunday Afternoon DJ [illegible] spins soul, funk, disco, Latin, house, jazz, reggae, & more. Kitty's. 2 pm. free

King of Kings DJ Smoke One and guests spin reggae, dancehall, roots, & lovers' rock. Hardrock [illegible] Lox. 9 pm. $8, $6 for house & students

Shell-Fill w/ DJ [illegible] spinning funk, hip-hop, reggae, funk, & house. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 pm. free

Sunday School w/ DJs spinning funk, funk, acid jazz, electro and house [illegible] and remixes, plus [illegible] spinning. White Lounge. 8 pm. free

Sundown & Soul Sundays [illegible] classic soul & R&B for [illegible]-style [illegible] Ammunas Inn & Grill. 7 pm. $6

Working Class DJ [illegible] spins [illegible] & [illegible] for [illegible] & restaurant staff. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

SAN FRANCISCO

Bar Brooklo w/ DJ [illegible] the [illegible] & guests spinning dub, funk, & dancehall classics. Elbo Room. 9 pm. $5

Bolding Sundays w/ DJ [illegible] & spinning hip-hop, R&B, reggaeton, & [illegible]. [illegible]. free

Bolding Pros [illegible] & guests spin reggae & dancehall. Underground SF. 9 pm. free before 10:30 pm. $5

Honey Sundays w/ Honey Soundsystem DJs spinning dance music. Paradise Lounge. 9 pm. free

Aslo Ried DJ [illegible] & guests spin [illegible], soul, & funk. [illegible]. 9 pm. free

Gratias Sundays restaurant/bar/hotel industry night w/ DJ Billy spinning top-40 mash-ups. Harry Harley. 9 pm. free

Sunday T-Dance w/ [illegible], [illegible] Hopkins, [illegible] Ilg, [illegible], and [illegible] & more. The Endup. 6 am-8 pm. $10

Super Bad Sundays w/ DJ [illegible], guests. The Endup. 8 pm. $5

MONDAY 1

EAST BAY

The 3-Day Weekend w/ DJ C-Mouse spinning local classics. Luka's Working & Lounge. 9 pm. free

DJ Angie spinning dub, ska, & soul. Easy Lounge. 9 pm. free

Irie Mondays DJs Wendy & Sarg spin reggae & dancehall. Kitty's. 9 pm. free

Club Rock & Gimer w/ Cara 4 p.m.-9 p.m. & [illegible] 9 p.m.-2 a.m. Club 1220. 9 pm-2 am. free

Latino Lovers rootsy DJs, plus Room, [illegible]. Bench & Bar. 9 pm. TBA

Mystery Night guest DJs spin hip-hop, new wave, & guests. Ruby Room. 10 pm-2 am. free

Underground Lounge psycho '60s & garage [illegible] music. Radio. 10 pm-2 am. free

Working Stiffs DJ Daniel [illegible] spins guests & old-school for food & restaurant staff. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

SAN FRANCISCO

Room, Gold Club Fat. 9:30 pm. $6 before 10 p.m. $5

DJ Rare spinning classic soul, rare grooves, & down-tempo. Skid Bar. 9 pm. free

Mondo [illegible] soul, funk, hip-hop, reggae, [illegible] & more. Little Baobab. 10 pm. $3

Rock Rock Slideshow w/ DJ [illegible] & the [illegible] of [illegible]. 10 pm. free

Mutual Vinyl w/ DJ Jenny Hodson spinning an eclectic mix of vinyl. El Rio. 6 pm-1 am. $5

Soul Cafe w/ DJ Jerry Blak & Room. Taylor. Add [illegible]. 10 pm. $5

Spirit Sessions w/ DJs [illegible], [illegible] & [illegible] spinning funk, soul, [illegible], 90's boogie, jazz, Latin, and classics. Tunnel Top. 10 pm. free

TUESDAY 2

EAST BAY

Tuesday Room Night plus line dancing. Club 1220. 9 pm. free

DJ Oratus Impact Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

DJ Delgado and Oratus spinning reggae and roots. Cato's Ale House. 8 pm. free

DJ Joe Quinn spinning salsa & Latin funk. Easy Lounge. 9 pm. free

DJ Wendy's DJ Skank w/ DJ Wendy & [illegible] spinning hip-hop and club classics. Kitty's. 9:30 pm. free

DJ Pretty spinning punk. Last Word-Fill Lounge. 9 pm-2 am. free

In the House DJ [illegible] spins soulful, sexy & funky house. Spin Ultra Lounge & Gourmet Pizza. 9 pm. free

Soul Pyrex DJs Sang, Kool Kyle, & Juan [illegible] spin reggae, dancehall, & classics. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 pm. free

Rootsy Tuesdays DJ spinning hip-hop & old-school. Blakes on Telegraph (upstairs). 10:30 pm. free

School Kong Golf? w/ DJs spinning rock, soul, funk, oldies, & soul. Ruby Room. 10 pm. free

PICK

Black Moth Super Rainbow

It's time to get weird, people. This week, the inimitable UK team Prodigy has bizarrely returned to smash up the Warfield after all these years, while Fool's Gold is getting lit at Mezzanine. But both pale in comparison to buzz-worthy experimental psych-pop hippies **Black Moth Super Rainbow**. The Pittsburgh-based five-piece has band members named "Power Pill Fist" and "Tobacco" on instruments like vocoder, Rhodes, and Novatron. Black Moth celebrates the release of its fourth album in six years, *Eating Us*, on label Graveface, by playing the esteemed **Bottom of the Hill** (1233 17th St., San Francisco) with equally batty Brooklyn trio **School of Seven Bells** on Thursday, May 28. 9 p.m. $14. BottomoftheHill.com *— David Downs*

SAVAGE LOVE

I RESEMBLE MY BOYFRIEND'S RAPIST

Plus: Is drug use the next frontier of the civil rights movement?

By Dan Savage

I have a problem with my happiness; he is a wonderful man who has a beauty that overwhelms me, we have a beautiful home. I am monogamous for the first time in a decade. But I just learned that I am the spitting image of a man in jail for raping my boyfriend.

He says he is not in a place to dig up his emotions about the subject and wants to hold off on sex — fine by me. I admire him and his courage to be with me despite my appearance. I still love him, but I feel like there is something I could do to help him, to help us. So I guess I am asking for suggestions.

Asking Not Begging

First suggestion: Verify his story.

If you have a stud double out there rotting in jail somewhere for raping your Wonder Boyfriend, ANB, then there are police reports and trial transcripts and a mug shot that looks just like you. Go find 'em.

I'm an asshole, of course, for casting doubt on your beautiful boyfriend's dramatic explanation for why his wonderfulness can't have sex with you right now. But I must, ANB, because one of two things is going on. Either your boyfriend is making this rape story up or he failed to share hugely pertinent info with you before moving in. Whichever it is, ANB, your boyfriend is at fault.

Why would he make it up? Well, it could be that he's not attracted to you, ANB, and manipulating you with a victim story allows him to reap the rewards of being with you while earning him a "Get Out of Fucking You Free" card.

If the story checks out, then your boyfriend has my sympathies. But if he wasn't ready to resume his romantic and sexual life, ANB, he had no right to be out there dating anyone, least of all a man who looks exactly like his rapist. At the very least, the onus was on him to disclose this information — his rape, your resemblance to his rapist — before moving in, not after.

And finally: If you're not having sex with your boyfriend, or anyone else, and there's no sex in your foreseeable future, ANB, that's not monogamy — that's celibacy.

I am a high-functioning regular heroin user (not quite an addict) and I feel constantly compelled to hide my drug use. I feel that there are similarities between being a drug user and having an alternate sexual orientation in the sense that both users and gays are constantly confronting judgmental opposition from an ill-informed and puritanical American public. I wonder whether you have any thoughts on this matter. Do you believe that drug users are deserving of the same kind of empowerment and liberation as gays, or do you view drug use as a "disease" that needs to be "cured" the same way that the Carrie Prejeans of the world believe gays need to be "cured"?

I realize that one significant difference between heroin use and sexual tastes is that heroin use is illegal, but of course gay relationships were illegal until relatively recently. Am I just rationalizing? Or could drug use be the next civil-rights frontier?

Dude Requests Understanding Gay Sensibility

Uh... gee.

I don't believe that all drug use is abuse, and I believe that recreational drugs can be used responsibly. And I believe a person should be able to use a drug regularly without being labeled an "addict." I also wish that more people were open about their drug use — but, in the hypocritical fashion of most Americans, only when we're talking about drugs that I like and have used myself, e.g., caffeine, sugar, pot, and my boyfriend's pheromones.

Recreational heroin? Heroin seems kind of extreme, DRUGS, as recreational drugs go. I've known a few people who've self-medicated with heroin and functioned well enough to get by — just — and I think that all drugs should be legal, your drug of choice included. We need to end the war on drugs, a failure and a waste of money and lives. And the quickest way to end it is for successful drug users to be open about our past, present, and future drug use. But I don't think "drug user" is an identity that's really comparable to sexual orientation. Using drugs is something you do, DRUGS; it's not something you are.

But, yeah, the freedom to use drugs can certainly be viewed as a civil rights issue. It's about the right to control what you do with your own body, and that argument resonates with others advanced by gay rights advocates and advocates of reproductive choice. But different drugs carry different risks and, legal or not, heroin is a highly dangerous drug. I think you have a right to use it if you want to use it and that you should have access to safe, medical-grade heroin and clean needles. But I don't think you should use it, not when there are other, better, safer drugs available.

Like my boyfriend's pheromones.

I like that you told PILL, the teenage girl who didn't like the pill and whose boyfriend "doesn't like" condoms, to "enjoy outercourse, oral, masturbation, and sex toys — and tell your boyfriend that these aren't consolation prizes for teenagers, but honest-to-God sex acts that adults enjoy." But I wish that you had mentioned all the other kinds of birth control out there. There's the Depo-Provera shot, the patch, the implant, the ring, IUDs, and cervical caps that can be used with spermicide. Also, there are many kinds of pills, and PILL should talk to a professional about which pills she was on and the specific things she didn't like about them.

I also had awful experiences with hormonal pills, and it took years until I finally got a great doctor who took the time to explain all my options. I now have a nonhormonal IUD. It is fantastic, and I am grateful for my doctor's advice. There's a great "birth control effectiveness chart" at Planned Parenthood's website (PlannedParenthood.org).

Been There Done That

Thanks for sharing, BTDT.

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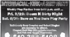

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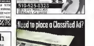
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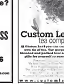
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